

ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

SIXTEENTH SESSION



COCANADA:

DECEMBER 29, 1941 TO JANUARY 1, 1942

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Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit,
President, All-India Women's Conference, Cocanada, 1941.

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PATRONESSES
of the
ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Lady Dorothy Halifax

Her Highness Maharani Chimnabai Gaekewar of Baroda

Lady Rama Varma of Cochin

Her Highness Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mayurbhanj

Rani Saheba Lalita Kumari Devi of Vizianagaram

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi

Mrs. P. K. Ray

Lady Vidyagauri R. Nilkanth

Lady Abdul Qadir

Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji

Her Highness Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi of Travancore

Mrs. M. E. Cousins

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade

Begum Shareefah Hamid Ali

Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru

**Names of Chairwomen and Hony. General Secretaries
From 1926-1941.**

Year.	Chairwoman.	Hony. General Secretary.
1926	—	Mrs. M. E. Cousins
1927	Mr. M. E. Cousins	Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya
1928	Begum Hamid Ali	" " "
1929	Mrs. Huidekoper	" " "
1930	Mrs. Sushama Sen	Mrs. Kamaladevi, Mrs. Sushama Sen and Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade
1931	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade
1932	" " "	" " "
1933	Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi	" " "
1934	Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade	Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee
1935	" " "	" " " "
1936	Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee	Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan
1937	Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan	Mrs. Dina Asana
1938	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	" " "
1939	Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade	Dr. Mrs. Malinibai B. Sukthankar
1940	Begum Hamid Ali	Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon
1941	Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru	Mrs. Urmila Mehta

**ASSOCIATION
of the
ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.**

**Members of the Standing Committee and Office-bearers of the
A. I. W. C.**

President and Chairwoman

Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Anand Bhavan, Allahabad, U.P.

Vice-Presidents

Lady Rama Rau, "North End", Carmichael Road, Bombay 6.

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, Gilchrist Gardens, Chetput, Madras.

Shrimati Kamladevi, Mangalore, S. India.

Yuvarani Vedavathi of Pithapuram, Pithapuram, S. India,

Mrs. Hannah Sen, Lady Irwin College, Sikandra Road, New Delhi.

Mrs. Asaf Ali, Cucha Chelan, Daryaganj, Delhi.

Hon. General Secretary

Mrs. Urmila Mehta, 15th Road, Khar, Bombay 21.

Hon. Treasurer

Mrs. G. R. Billimoria, Thoburn House, Apollo Bunder, Bombay.

Patrons on the Standing Committee

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Hyderabad (Deccan).

Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi, "Shanti", Besant Avenue, Adyar, Madras.

H. H. Maharani Chinnabai Saheba Gaekewar of Baroda, Baroda.

Lady Abdul Qadir, Temple Road, Lahore.

Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji, Hyderabad (Deccan).

Mrs. M. E. Cousins, "Ghat View", Kotagiri, The Nilgiris.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Sewagram, Wardha, C. P. (Summer) "Manorville",
Simla, W.

Rani Lakshmi Bai Rajwade, Gwalior, C. I.

Begum Hamid Ali, Fatehganj, Baroda, & (Summer) Southwood, Mussoorie, U.P.

Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, 2, Warris Road, Lahore.

Liaison Officer

Begum Hamid Ali, Fatehganj, Baroda, and (Summer) Southwood, Mussoorie, U.P.

Editor of the Roshni

Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon, Nazarbagh, Lucknow, U. P.

Members-in-charge of Special Subjects

Constitution:—Miss Leilamani Naidu, Hyderabad (Deccan).

Health:—Mrs. Kamala Nimbkar, Amerind, Khar, Bombay 21.

General Education:—Mrs. Hannah Sen, Lady Irwin College, Sikandra Rd., New Delhi.

Adult Education & Literacy:—Mrs. Renuka Ray, 5, Bhagwandas Road, New Delhi.

Harijan Welfare:—Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta, Near Gujarat College, Ahmedabad.

Social Problems:—Mrs. J. R. Doctor, 93, Gowalia Tank Rd., Bachually Chambers, Bombay 26.

Legal Disabilities & Legislation:—Mrs. Kitty Shiva Rao, 7, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi.

Franchise & Citizenship:—Mrs. Hansa Mehta, King Edward Road, Parel, Bombay 12.

Labour & Child Labour:—Mrs. Sudha Majumder, 29/1, Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta.

Indigenous Industries:—Mrs. Kamamma Dasappa, Mahila Seva Samaja, Basavangudi, Bangalore City.

Traffic in Women & Children:—Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee, 25/1, Rowland Rd., Calcutta.

Indians Overseas:—Begum Hamid Ali, Fatehganj, Baroda; (Southwood, Mussoorie)

Conveners of Sub-Committees.

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) Collection of information regarding Institutions working for women and Children:— | Convener: —Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai
"The Retreat", Shahibagh,
Ahmedabad. |
| (2) Village Reconstruction:— | Secretary: —Shrimati Mridula
Sarabhai. |
| (3) Women Workers' Training Scheme:— | Convener: —Shrimati Kamaladevi,
Mangalore, S. India. |
| (4) Collection of data on the existing careers and Training centres open to women:— | Convener: —Mrs. Hansa Mehta,
King Edward Road,
Bombay 12. |

Members co-opted

Mrs. B. Kameswaramma, Vani Vilas Mohalla, Mysore.

Mrs. Renu Chakravarty (nee Miss Renu Roy) 36, Wellington Street, Calcutta.

Mrs. Kulsum Sayani, Rupa Villa, Cumballa Hill, Bombay.

Miss Kamal Wagle, Social Service League, Sandhurst Road, Bombay 4.

Branch Representatives

<i>Ajmere-Merwara</i>	
<i>Andhra</i>	Mrs. J. Sitamahalakshmi, B. A., LL. B., Tanuku, W. Godavari Dt.
<i>Assam</i>	Mrs. Shantabai Desai, Alcapore, Shillong.
<i>Baroda</i>	Mrs. Kamalabai Tilak, M.A., Shavantibag, Pratapganj, Baroda.
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<i>Bengal West</i>	Miss Satadal Roy, Head Mistress, Mission Girls' School, Bankura, Bengal.
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<i>Bihar</i>	Mrs. Vidyavati Varma, C/o. Justice Varma, Patna.
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<i>Calcutta City & Suburbs</i>	Mrs. Shamsun Nahar Mahmud, Calcutta Police Hos- pital, 77, Shambhunath Pandit Street, Calcutta.
<i>C. P. North</i>	Mrs Kamalabai Golwalkar, C/o. R. B. Pandit Golwal- kar, Lordganj, Jubbulpore.
<i>C. P. South</i>	Miss Tara K. Pradhan, Krishna Bhuvan, Humpyard Road, Nagpur.
<i>Cochin</i>	Miss S. K. Sharada, B. A., B. L., Vakeel, Trichur, Cochin State.
<i>Delhi</i>	Mrs. Rajan Nehru, 3, Hardinge Avenue, New Delhi.
<i>Gujarat</i>	Miss Nargis Navroji Kavina, "Naoroze Villa", Shahi- bagh, Ahmedabad.
<i>Gwalior</i>	Mrs. Chandrakala Sahai, 10, J. A. Hospital, Gwalior, C. I.
<i>Hyderabad (Dn.)</i>	Mrs. S. Verghese, King Koti Square, Dyderabad (Dn.)
<i>Hyderabad (Sind)</i>	Miss Thakuri V. Lakhani, Training College for Women, Hyderabad (Sind).
<i>Indore</i>	Mrs. Bryce, Christian College, Indore, C. I.
<i>Jath</i>	Miss Manoramabai Khabade, Kanyashala, Jath State (Bijapur).
<i>Karnatak</i>	Mrs. Krishnabai Panjekar, Saraswat Colony, Dharwar.
<i>Kashmir</i>	Begum Zafar Ali, Inspectress of Girls' Schools, Srinagar.
<i>Kolhapur</i>	Mrs. Leelabai Uplekar, Karwir Bhagini Mandal, Shahupuri, Kolhapur State.
<i>Konkan</i>	Dr. P. Kelkar, L. C. P. & S., Chairman, Kolaba Women's Asson., Alibagh, Dt. Kolaba.
<i>Madras City & Suburbs</i>	Mrs. Mary N. Clubwala, "Philroy", Nungambakkam High Road, Cathedral P. O., Madras.

<i>Maharashtra</i>	Mrs. Indirabai Maydeo, C/o. Engineer Maydeo, Malshiras, Dt. Sholapur.
<i>Malabar</i>	Miss K. E. Sharada, Chalapuram, Calicut, S. Malabar.
<i>Mysore</i>	Mrs. A. Sharadamma, M.A., C/o. Mahila Seva Samaja, P. O. Basavangudi, Bangalore City.
<i>N. W. F. P.</i>	Mrs. Kazi Mir Ahmed, Ahmed Manzil, Peshawar Cantt.
<i>Orissa</i>	Shrimati Sarala Devi, M. L. A., Cuttack, Orissa.
<i>Phaltan</i>	Mrs. Janakibai Godbole, Phaltan (Deccan).
<i>Punjab Central</i>	Shrimati Premvati Thapar, 1/A, Golf Road, Lahore.
<i>Punjab East</i>	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Jullundur City.
<i>Sangli</i>	Miss Kamal Padalkar, Women's Education Society's Girls' Hostel, Sangli, S. M. C.
<i>Sind</i>	Dr. Mrs. K. Tarabai, Bunder Road, Karachi.
<i>Tamil Nad</i>	Mrs. M. E. Cousins, "Ghat View", Kotagiri, The Nilgiris.
<i>Travancore</i>	Miss B. Ayesha Bibi, S. N. V. Sadanam, Thycaud, Trivandrum.
<i>U. P. Agra</i>	Mrs. Kamala Kak, Canning Road, Allahabad.
<i>U. P. Oudh</i>	Miss Gladys Owen, Nur Manzil, Lalbagh, Lucknow.
Hony. Secretary, All-India Women's Education Fund Association:—Mrs. Sewa Singh Gill, 6, Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi.	
W. I. A. co-opted Member:—Mrs. Savitri Rajan, "Sheshadri", Royapettah High Rd., Mylapore, Madras.	

Members of the Executive Committee.

- Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, *President*.
Mrs. Urmila Mehta, *Hon. General Secretary*.
Mrs. G. R. Billimoria, *Hon. Treasurer*.
Miss Leilamani Naidu, *Member-in-charge of Constitution*.
Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, *Patron*.
Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, *Patron*.
Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan, *Vice-President*.
Shrimati Kamaladevi, *Vice-President*.
Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee, *Member for Traffic in Women and Children*.
Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon, *Editor of the Roshni*.
Mrs. Rajan Nehru, *Branch Representative, Delhi*.
Mrs. A. Sharadamma, *Branch Representative, Mysore*.
Mrs. Shamsun Nahar Mahmud, *Branch Representative, Calcutta*.
Mrs. Indirabai Maydeo, *Branch Representative, Maharashtra*.
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LIST OF DELEGATES

Cocanada Session - December-January, 1941-42.

ANDHRA—

Mrs. Jasty Sitamahalaxmi
Mrs. D. Kamala Ratnam
Mrs. B. Sitabai
Mrs. Koka Krishnavenamma
Mrs. S. Subhadramma
Mrs. B. Satyavati
Mrs. Papayamma
Miss Swarajyalakshmi
Mrs. V. Kamaladevi
Mrs. U. Lakshmikantamma
Shrimati C. Ammana Raja
Mrs. H. Sushilabai Sadashivarao
Mrs. Ch. Chandramathi
Mrs. B. Kamakshamma
Mrs. B. Kameswaramma

BARODA—

Shrimati Sushila Kumari Pandit

BERAR—

Mrs. Vimaladevi P. Deshmukh
Mrs. Kokila J. Patel

BOMBAY—

Miss B. A. Engineer
Mrs. Kulsum Sayani
Mrs. Urmila Mehta
Mrs. Jayashri Raiji
Mrs J. R. Doctor
Miss Lilavati Vora
Miss Dhunlaxmi Mehta
Miss Najoo Wadia
Miss Anasuya Bharatiya
Mrs. Kapila Godiwala
Miss Kamal Wagle
Lady Rama Rau
Mrs. Kamala Nimbkar.

DELHI—

Mrs. Hannah Sen
Mrs. Renuka Ray
Mrs. Rajan Nehru
Mrs. Kitty Shiva Rao

GUJARAT—

Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai

HYDERABAD (Dn.)

Miss Leilamani Naidu
Mrs. S. Verghese
Mrs. R. Obul Reddy
Mrs. B. Ramakrishnarao
Mrs. Y. Sitakumari
Mrs. T. Varalakshmiamma

HYDERABAD (Sind)

Mrs. Sati Kevalram

INDORE—

Miss Sushila Bhusari
Dr. Miss Thanawalla
Miss Zanane
Mrs. Tikekar

KARNATAK—

Shrimati Kamaladevi
Mrs. Mackinnyn
Mrs. Krishnabai Panjekar

MADRAS—

Mrs. Mary Clubwala
Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan
Miss Nina Pillai
Mrs. V. T. Lakshmi
Miss R. Vilasini Devi Shenai

(viii)

MAHARASTRA—

Mrs. Tarabai Patwardhan
Mrs. Vanutai Ajrekar
Miss B. Mustaffa Khan

MYSORE—

Mrs. Kamalamma Dasappa
Mrs. S. R. Mandyam
Mrs. A. N. Kalappa
Mrs. R. A. Srinivasa Ayyangar
Mrs. N. A. Srinivas Achar
Mrs. B. Vasudevamurthi
Dr. Ratnamma Isaac
Mrs. M. Gouramma Mahadevappa

ORISSA—

Shrimati Sarala Devi
Shrimati Latika Devi

PUNJAB CENTRAL—

Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru

SANGLI—

Miss Manubai Padalkar
Miss Lila Bhadbhade

SIND—

Dr. K. Tarabai
Miss J. H. Sethna
Sati Mirchandani
Mrs. Gomibai Wadhmal

TAMIL NADU—

Mrs. M. E. Cousins

U P. AGRA—

Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
Mrs. Madan

U. P. OUDH—

Miss Gladys Owen

THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

The All-India Women's Conference met this year under many difficulties, partly circumstantial and partly due to the state of uncertainty created by the war. When we received the invitation from Andhra, it was supposed that the Conference would meet at Rajahmundry, a centrally located city in Andhra. But owing to the enthusiasm and zeal of our Cocanada friends, the venue of the Conference was changed to Cocanada.

The Reception Committee, with its energetic Secretary Mrs. B. Kameswaramma, exerted itself most untiringly to make the Conference a success in spite of the comparatively lesser attendance this year. Perhaps the remoteness of Cocanada for many delegates might have accounted for the poorer attendance. The enthusiasm of those present, the seriousness with which they applied themselves to the many problems that the Conference had to tackle and the new directions of activities chalked out, have made this year's Conference a unique one.

The proceedings of the Conference were listened in by a large number of women visitors from Andhra and they took a keen and studious interest in the whole proceedings.

The All-India Women's Conference at Cocanada passed two concrete proposals, one of which was a Village Reconstruction Project, which is now being worked out. The second proposal was to start a training camp for provincial organisers—to train members from our Branches and also other women workers. This has since been started under the able guidance of Shrimati Kamaladevi. The Women Workers' Training Camp is situated at Abrama, Gujarat, with 50 Campers.

The resolutions of the last session covered a wide field of national and international importance such as War and Peace, Civil Liberties, control of Prices, and Communal harmony, etc. The Group system was also continued.

The Cocanada Reception Committee had taken great pains to make the Conference a success. They had organised a small but very attractive exhibition where the famous 'Khadi' of Andhra Desha was very prominent and it justly attracted the attention. The sale of Khadi at the Exhibition was very good.

To the Reception Committee at Cocanada, our heartfelt thanks are due. Its Chairman, Yuvarani Vedavathi of Pithapuram, and her family rendered valuable and indefatigable help towards good organisation. We also thank the Reception Committee for their liberal hospitality. The delegates were few, but we are sure, they have carried the message of the Conference to their respective Branches, and will work with a will for our great organisation.

ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Programme

of

the opening session.

December 29, 1941: at 4 P. M.

1. Welcome Song.
2. Election of the President.
Proposed by: Mrs. Rameswari Nehru.
Seconded by: Mrs. Ammu Swaminadhan.
Mrs. Cousins.
3. Reading of Messages.
4. Welcome Address.
Sri Yuvaranee Saheba of Pithapuram
Chairwoman of the Reception Committee.
5. Annual Report.
Mrs. Urmila Mehta,
Hon. General Secretary A. I. W. C.
6. Presidential Address.
Sri Vijayalakshmi Pandit.
7. Other Addresses.
 1. Maharajah of Pithapuram.
 2. Sri T. Prakasam.
 3. Miss Anne Guthrie.
8. Vote of Thanks.
Mrs. Renuka Ray
National Anthem.

PROCEEDINGS.

Proceedings commenced at 4 P. M. with the singing of a National Song by Miss V. Anasuya Devi and sister, and with the reading of welcome verses in Telugu by Miss V. Anasuya Devi of Cocanada, after which Mrs. Kameswaramma requested Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru to open the Conference. Mrs. Rameshwari Nehru rising amidst enthusiastic ovation, said :

Brothers and Sisters,

Before I say anything else, I just want to tell you, how sorry and awkward I feel when I am obliged to speak to you in English. Each time I come to the South, as I often do, I have to do it much against my will. I long for the day when it would be possible for me to address you in Hindustani, and it would be possible for all of you to understand it.

My duty today is to propose Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit to the Chair and to introduce her to you. It is a very pleasant duty, and is as pleasant as easy for her name is already well-known, and, I believe, there is no one here who has not heard it. Many of you as Congress Members must be familiar with the manifold activities with which she has been associated.

She comes from a family which is rich in the traditions of service to the country and she has lived up to those traditions. Her chief centre of work has been in the political field. Being an old member of the Congress she has held many offices under its auspices. She suffered imprisonment many times and acted as the first woman minister (under the Congress regime) in the United Provinces. (Applause.) In the discharge of her duties as a Minister she did credit to the high post she held. She was the most popular Minister in the Province with whom her colleagues were happy to work. She is well-known for her tact, for her discrimination, for her grasp of things and for her ability to work with all kinds of people and in all kinds of situations. She knows how to tackle difficult problems and in her dextrous hands they become easy of solution. It is her tact and her capacity for hard work which has given her the position in the public life of the country which she holds today. I am happy indeed that today I am entrusting the work of the All-India Women's Conference to a woman who is capable of guiding its affairs skilfully and will lead the Conference to higher and greater success.

The work of the All-India Women's Conference is growing day by day. With the expansion of its scope and the increase of its members, in the course of its day to day work, it presents difficulties which for successful handling require great tact and wisdom and Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit is fortunately endowed with all that tact and wisdom, (Hear, hear, and applause). I am sure that under her inspiring leadership the Conference will attain greater and greater heights and will fully achieve the goal for the attainment of which we have been working all these years, (Applause). I wish her a happy year of service and success in the new sphere of work which she is undertaking today. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, I propose you to take the Chair. (continued cheers.)

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan in seconding the proposal said :

I have very great pleasure in seconding the proposal of Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru that Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit should take the Chair as our President. In Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit we see a woman so well fitted to be the President of the All-India Women's Conference. I know that she needs no introduction to any public in India and she is also well-known by her public activities in most parts of the world. For the coming year we are indeed very proud to have her as our President and we feel sure that it will be a very successful year under her able guidance and inspiration.

In honouring Shrimati Vijayalakshmi we are not honouring one individual woman but we are honouring all womanhood in India. We have in her an embodiment of all that is ideal in womanhood. I know we are all impatiently waiting for the Presidential address, and so I will not take any more time. I welcome her most heartily to South India as this is the first occasion when we are having the pleasure of her presence in our midst.

Mrs. B. Kameswaramma speaking in Telugu expressed her happiness as this Conference was being held in Andhra Desa for the first time and she was extremely glad and Andhra Desa felt fortunate that this Conference session was to be presided over by a gifted and inspiring distinguished woman, Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and that Andhra was blessed to have happy contacts with the women of all parts of India who were pleased to attend this Conference in spite of inconveniences. She was very thankful to Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit for having accepted the Presidentship of this august session and ensured the hope of more successful work in the coming year under her able guidance. Mrs.

Kameswaramma also introduced Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit to the Telugu audience stating her work and position and family connections and traditions.

Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins of Madras rising amidst enthusiasm and cheers, said:

Friends and Sisters and Brothers,

It is a very happy occasion for me to be at this session in which the Andhra women are holding for the first time the Annual Session of the All-India Women's Conference. We have had very fine Constituency Conferences in many towns in Andhra Desa. This is the first time in the 16 years of life of the Women's Conference in which the womanhood of all Andhra Desa, I must also say the manhood (laughter) has participated in this Conference representing all-India womanhood, with the members of the High Command of the Women's Conference present. I am here to support the proposal of welcome to Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, the Ministress; yes, Ministress, because she ministers to the wants of men and women of the United Provinces, and she is now ministering to the needs of all India! We cannot have a better person than Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit to be our President. Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, we are lucky in having you as the President of this Women's Conference. We know that other parts of the country are active and have held very fine Exhibitions. You have seen in the Women's Exhibition what Andhra is, the wares, the beautiful hand-made stuffs manufactured in Andhra; what a wonderful variety in the hand-made stuffs we have got. Andhras, men, women and girls wear Khaddar cloth. Look this side, and that side and you see how splendidly dressed they are in the cloth of Andhra! Everything can be had in Andhra. It is a land of true Indian culture. I lived eleven years in Andhra and I learnt Indian life in Andhra. I have worked in Andhra Desa, so I consider myself one of Andhra's citizens and on their behalf I claim to welcome you (Mrs. Pandit). I feel that the work I did in Andhra-Desa and in India is crowned with success by being crowned here by our having you as our President, you, who have been not only an elected member of the Legislative Assembly of the United Provinces, but also the first woman Minister in India.

Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was then garlanded by Shrimati B. Kameswaramma amidst enthusiastic cheering. Occupying the Presidential seat, Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit called upon the General Secretary of the Conference, Shrimati Urmila Mehta, to read the messages of greetings.

Shrimati Urmila Mehta then read the messages* received from distinguished men and women friends and others who are interested in the work of the All-India Women's Conference. Messages received were from :—

Mrs. Asaf Ali	Mrs. Sarojini Naidu
Begam Hamid Ali	Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Mrs. Thangam Anandram	Shri V. K. Lakshmikutty
Miss Vera Brittain, England	Neithyaramma
Madame Chiang Kai Shek, China	Miss Alice Paul
Rani Lakshmi Devi of Phaltan	Shrimati Savitri Rajan
Maharani Lalita Kumari Devi	Rani Lakshmi Bai Rajwade
of Vizianagaram.	Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao
Rajkumari Leelavati Devi of Mysore	Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi
H. H. Maharani Sucharu Devi	Miss Hilda Samuel
of Mayurbhanj	Shri Pattabhi Sitaramayya
Mahatma Gandhi	Mrs. Radhabai Subbarayan
Mrs. Janakibai Godbole	Mrs. K. Ramasubamma
Miss Duncan Harris, England	Indian Adult Education Association
Miss Agatha Harrison, England	National Council of Women in India
Rajkumari Amrit Kaur	Women's Indian Association
Mrs. Grace Lankester	Calcutta Branch, A. I. W. C.
Mrs. Hansaben Mehta	President Mysore State Women's
Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta	Association
Mrs S. C. Mukerjee	

* * * *

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

by

Shri Yuvaranee Vedavathi of Pithapuram

(Chairwoman of the Reception Committee)

Mrs. Pandit, Delegates and members of the Audience, It is a great privilege and pleasure to extend to you a warm welcome. In extending this warm welcome, on behalf of the whole of the Andhra Desa, I sincerely hope you will have a pleasant stay here and will carry away with you pleasant memories, notwithstanding any inconveniences caused.

To you, **Mrs. Pandit,** we of the Reception Committee, offer our greetings and welcome you with all the warmth of the heart. We are

* See Appendix I for full list of Messages.



**Yuvarani Vedavathi of Pithapuram,
Chairwoman, Reception Committee, Cocanada.**

indeed fortunate in having you here at this session as our President. The eminent place that you have occupied in the body politic of the country is too great to need any elaboration. While differences of opinion may exist as regards the path that one chooses to follow in politics, none can deny that unstinted admiration for your great ability and sacrifices which you have made in following your lights is due to you from every person in the country and beyond too.

This session of the All-India Women's Conference meets at a momentous time in the history of the nations. Flames of destruction and forces of violence are unleashed on an unprecedented scale. While in this world-wide flare-up of inhumanity and barbarism we are moved by the pitiable agonies of the heart, we are fortified with the belief and hope that, in the triumph of justice and humanity over untruth and cruelty, a new and a better world order would be established. While we sorrow over the destruction of the old civilisation, we take consolation in the promise of the dawn of the new civilisation, a civilisation of greater peace and wider prosperity.

We cannot fail to take notice of world events, for that imaginary line of demarcation between world affairs and national affairs is fast disappearing. In the flow of world currents and in the throes of world convulsions, where have the small pools of provincialism, and even nationalism, a place? The world events are a challenge to our ability and faculty. It is as much for us the women, as for the men, to take up the challenge of the times, and to prepare and equip ourselves for the coming events. When the history of the present period comes to be written, let it not be said that the women had failed.

The All-India Women's movement is not an isolated movement. It is part of a great world movement. We are seeing with what heroism and strength of conviction, our comrades, the women in China, Russia, Britain and America are facing the cruel vicissitudes of fortune. In all likelihood we may have to face a similar fate. I am confident that the women of this country will then be not found wanting.

The Women's movement in this country has yet to travel a long road, when compared with similar movements in other countries. Our rights ought to be yet recognised, and they are to be established. The freedom of the woman is to be established on a basis of equality with man. The modern woman relies on herself alone as a unit in the scheme of things. She neither wants the pedestal of a goddess nor the shackles

of a slave. She wants to be just a human being. To be that the condition-precedent is her individual freedom. And where is that freedom without those basic social rights ?

Our movement is not against any one, it is entirely to help vindicate the natural inherent rights of the women, which have been for a long time denied. We do not claim any special privileges, as the so called weaker-sex. We claim the same rights and privileges which our comrade, the man, claims for himself. This claim takes us into the spheres of social effort, education, politics and jurisprudence. Our demands for proper educational facilities, social reform, franchise, and equal representation in the services and for the recognition of our rights, in economic and legal spheres, fall into those categories.

I even feel that it cannot be said, women have no place in the Army. This is conceded to a great extent in some of the other countries.

While peace, and not destruction of humanity, is the cherished desire of the woman, an active role in the war machinery becomes a sacred duty when arms ought to be taken up in the defence of Justice and Liberty. It is a choice between the relatively good and the relatively bad. And all life, is that. Thus it becomes almost a crusade of peace. From this standpoint opportunities in the fighting services of the country are demanded till that time when all war is banned, in theory and practice.

While the women of the country have duties to perform by the society as members of the society on a footing of social equality with man (the word social is used in its most comprehensive form) they cannot forget and ignore their duties by the Home. The Home for the time being, is generally accepted by a great number of people, at least in this country, as a very convenient and useful basic social unit. It is almost a little world to us, with all its responsibilities, charms, and difficulties. In this small world the woman shoulders one great responsibility, the responsibility of bringing up the children. This bringing up of the children means a great deal. In helping the formation of their character, their outlook on life, in giving shape as it were to the very life of the future citizens of the world, we are expected to perform a great task. While the responsibilities are great, bristling with difficulties, it cannot be denied that the moulding of the future generations of the world and consequently helping the shaping of the future history of the world, is of gigantic interest. It is a process of creation.



Mrs. Urmila Mehta,
Hon. General Secretary, All-India Women's Conference, 1941

Thus the woman becomes a creator in the true sense.—And in rocking the cradle, she rocks the world !

Now the time is come when we are confronted with problems that are not limited to the exclusive spheres of the woman or the man alone. They belong to the common humanity. Bewildering and baffling they demand a solution. Perhaps the perfect solution will never be possible in the sphere of human activities, limited as the human being is in his intellectual and physical capabilities. But nevertheless, a solution of the problems is an imperative need, if a belief in a better future is to be maintained. While the Elysium, the Arch-type will perhaps for ever remain a dream, a less troublesome world, a more convenient world, is undoubtedly feasible.

This conception is not Utopian, it is practicable. It can be realised and it shall be achieved, if only the human spirit equips itself properly and pursues the path bravely believing in the precept, *Laboria Estoria*.

It is an effort, a great and worthy effort. Disarmament, greater peace, a more sensible economic rehabilitation and a better and more equitable distribution of world's natural resources, a more human view of science, education, and art, are all factors in that effort.

As this effort is a common concern of the man and the woman and as the dawning of a New Era of brilliance is to be the outcome of the common endeavour of humanity, let us bestow our thought on it and make a beginning in the right direction. Let it be said that, in this great renaissance of world conscience and world rebuilding, the women of this country contributed their mite and wrote a brilliant chapter by scoring where our comrade, the man, had failed.

President : The Secretary will now present the Annual Report.

Shrimati Urmila Mehta then read the following Annual Report of the Conference for the year 1941.

ANNUAL REPORT 1941.

Madam President, Yuvarani Saheba and Friends,

The year under report, despite the worsening International situation, has been one of steady quiet work for the Conference and its Branches. Constructive work of various kinds has been undertaken by the 38 Branches and 150 Sub-Branches, with their 10,000 Members scattered all over the land. New Branches have been opened at Kashmir and Hyderabad, Sind

(originally a Sub-Branch), while the flagging energies of the Bihar Branch with Patna as its centre were revived by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit. The work of the Orissa and North West Frontier Province Branches have also been revived this year. The Karnatak Branch was visited by the Honorary General Secretary and it is now being helped to work on constitutional lines. The Branches vary in size from those with a thousand members, as in Maharastra, to small groups of women doing equally important work though in more difficult and less advanced areas.

All our Branches have in varying degrees worked towards the spread of literacy among adults. While one or two had to close down their classes for want of funds, and even Delhi complains of lack of funds, the Bombay Branch was like last year foremost in its efforts to eradicate illiteracy. They conducted about thirty classes receiving a grant of Rs. 500/-. the maximum grant that the Bombay Government pays to any one Society. Their work was mentioned especially by the Bombay Committee for Adult Education appointed by the Government of Bombay. If the Bombay Branch and its Members working in other capacities have been able to make nearly 10,000 women literate in two years, we feel that provided all the Branches made similar or greater efforts, the illiteracy of Indian women would soon be a thing of the past.

The Child Marriage Restraint Bill on similar lines to the Sharda Act was, we regret to see, thrown out in Hyderabad but, we are pleased to report, accepted in Cochin. Our Members in the States have worked hard for such reforms, but the attention that used formerly to be devoted to ensuring an enforcement of the Sharda Act has grown regretably lax and hence one hears of child marriages in villages. We would urge our members to be alert about these abuses and take due measures for their prevention.

In the first half of the year, all our Branches concentrated on studying the questionnaire of the Hindu Law Committee and sent in detailed replies to our office. These were consolidated and forwarded to Sir B. N. Rau's Committee. Our Standing Committee met for its half-yearly meeting in Bombay, in May, as its reply to the Hindu Law Committee questionnaire had to be sent in before June. It immediately forwarded its Report to the Hindu Law Committee. While thanking the Government for the appointment of this Committee, it urged the appointment of at least two women representatives on the Committee and also desired that the terms of reference be widened so as to include an inquiry into all the disabilities of

women under Hindu Law. The demand for women representatives on the Committee has not yet been satisfied, though the scope of the Committee has been slightly enlarged.

The half-yearly meeting appointed an *ad hoc* Committee to consider a village project to be undertaken by the Conference. This Committee met in Delhi in September and its Report will be presented to the Conference.

The Lady Irwin College in raising the status of Domestic Science as a school subject, steadily continued its development. Attracting, as it does, girls from all over India, the College is able to render real unspectacular service to the cause of the unity of the peoples of India—one of the main ideals for which our Conference stands. This year, the College and its students were very gracious and efficient hostesses to our village project Sub-Committee

The quarterly Bulletin of the Conference, *Roshni*, very ably edited by Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon, is spreading the cause of our Conference and bringing its activities to the notice of our members as well as the general public. It is even finding its way to some of the public libraries in the country. This year the Berar Branch has also been bringing out its own Quarterly, *Mahila*, while the Sangli Branch has its own half-yearly manuscript magazine

In addition to all these specific activities already mentioned, our Branches are attending to the health of women and children by running clubs, physical activity centres, lectures on sanitation and dietetics, distribution of milk to needy children and hospital visiting, and T. B. investigation; Harijan work, Birth Control study, and clinical work and general educational activities have also been undertaken by some of the Branches. Some Branches are running Nursery and Elementary Schools, while those started by others have been taken over by their local Educational authorities. The training of women in small homecrafts and industries and the marketing of these products as well as the finding of employment for women are part of the programmes of some Branches, while similar activities in other places are also undertaken by our Members though not on behalf of the Conference.

The holding of Exhibitions of Women's handicraft, particularly of of swadeshi materials, and the spread of Swadeshi are regular features of most of the local Conference and Echo Conference of our Branches, which are also helping to spread the knowledge and use of Hindustani.

We had hoped that distinguished women from England, China and the Phillipines who had taken an active part in various Women's Movements would be with us at this Conference as Special Delegates. World events have unfortunately deprived us of their presence but we trust happier times will soon reunite the women of the world.

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, the great Leader of China, presented Shrimati Kamala Devi with a Chinese Banner for women of India. Kamaladevi has handed it over to our Conference which will be presented here formally; we shall treasure this beautiful Banner as a symbol of good fellowship between two ancient civilizations and cultures of the East.

Cocanada,
29th December 1941.

(Mrs.) Urmila Mehta,
*Honorary General Secretary,
All-India Women's Conference.*

Shrimati Kamaladevi who was greeted with ovation, said :—

President and Sisters and Brothers,

I have very great pleasure in presenting this picture which has come to us, the women of India, as a gift from Madame Chiang-Kai Shek of China (The gift of a picture on big canvas was shown to the assembly). I should like to tell you what that picture is. When I was in Chunking, the capital of China, we talked of India and of the necessity and the urge we felt for the women of India and the women of China to come together; and when I was leaving China Madame Chiang-Kai Shek felt that I should carry a token of the feeling she had for India and its women in the shape of this banner. If you look at this picture you will find in it the Eagle swooping down on the rising Sun trying to battle with the Sun. It is supposed to represent China fighting with Japan that is, China stands for the Eagle and the Rising Sun for Japan. There is an ancient verse in Chinese recorded here alongside of this picture. (The picture is referred to here). This has been translated into English by Madame Chiang-Kai Shek in explanation of this picture, which is called the "EAGLE."

It reads thus :—

When and where is the eagle to be seen at his noblest ?
In the mountain forest when the mist covers
his feathers with rain drops

When his threatening beak looms through the high clouds
In the late autumn when he faces peril and danger.

You would now realise the spirit with which it is given to the women of India. It may interest you further to know that it was prepared in the course of air raids and got ready and mounted up in an air raid shelter while the bombs were dropping on around from above. It is why you will find a few black spots on it. Madame Chiang-Kei Shek deeply regretted and conveyed her apologies for it. I would regard it as a great treasure, because the banner represents the gift coming to us of a China carrying on her struggle, to the women of India who are also carrying on a similar struggle for the freedom of their country.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit then rose up amidst resounding enthusiastic cheers and began to deliver her Presidential address.

Speaking in Hindustani, she said, "I have heard that Hindi is practised here as *Rashtra Bhasha*. I would like to speak in that *Rashtra Bhasha*, for, I am ashamed to speak in a foreign tongue. But I understand that still a majority of those present here cannot follow if I speak in Hindi. With your permission, therefore, I address you in English.

Friends,

I am glad to be in your midst today and I am deeply conscious of the honour you have done me in electing me your president. My thanks, however, will be better shown through any service I may be able to render during the coming year, and if I am able to translate into action even a few of the ideas and ideals I have for this organisation then the fact that I have not thanked you formally today will not matter.

I was unable to share in your deliberations last year, but I followed each detail of the Mysore Session from behind the bars of the Naini Central Prison and read with interest and satisfaction of the work that was being done and the spirit that was moving our sisters to greater efforts in every direction. But the world moves so rapidly these days that already last year seems a century old. New problems arise before old ones have been solved—new doubts create conflict in our minds and a heaviness in our hearts—leaving us weary. The problems of our own country loom large before us but larger and more threatening are those world problems which we, as women, have to face. The war rages unabated and draws nearer to our country. Suffering and sorrow go through the world hand in hand leaving desolation in countless homes in many countries. Let us spare a moment to send a word of sympathy and greetings to all those people whose countries are today involved in war.

I regret that it has not been possible for any visitors from overseas to attend this session of the Conference. You are perhaps aware that we had invited Miss Vera Brittain as one of our distinguished guests this year. She had accepted our invitation and we were looking forward to meeting one with whom we were already familiar through her writings. Her "Letters to Peace Lovers" have struck a responsive chord in many Indian hearts. But permission for her to come to India was withheld in spite of every effort made by our Liaison Committee in England and by our retiring President here. Miss Brittain's views on war are well known and the authorities felt that her presence in India might "further embarrass an already tense situation." The decision of the authorities was unfortunate. At this critical period in the relationship between the people of India and those of England human contacts are important. Miss Vera Brittain's visit would have forged another link in that chain of friendship between our peoples which this organisation has been slowly trying to create.

I should like to express my gratification at the presence of Shrimati Kamaladevi in our midst today after her long absence abroad where she has so ably represented India's cause in many countries. I am sure you will permit me to extend a welcome to her on behalf of the Conference.

For several years now our Conference has passed resolutions expressing its opinion against war as a method of solving international problems. At each session we have spoken in eloquent terms of the necessity for a united front by the women of India in condemning the forces of aggression. Unfortunately, however, our resolutions have not gone very far beyond the hall in which they were passed, nor has there been perhaps an adequate understanding on the part of the majority of our sisters of the implications of our anti-war resolutions. We have been far away from the horrors of war and it is not always easy to understand an issue, however vital, which does not concern one directly. The situation has, however, changed during the last year and today the possibility of war is nearer to India than ever before. From what angle are we going to approach the problem at this session of our Conference? I realise that I am trading on perilous ground when I put this question to you; nevertheless I believe we cannot ignore a question just because it is difficult. I would like you to think of this and give an answer in language which will leave no doubt as to what the women of India want. My own views on this subject are known. I do not wish to inflict them on you, but I do desire, most earnestly, that the Conference should think of this question, not in narrow terms, but with a real understanding of the vital issues involved and with a knowledge

of the background which has made such chaos possible in a so-called civilised world. Wars do not come upon one unawares. They are the inevitable consequence of certain policies. A war is the result of certain economic and other causes. So long as governments persist in such policies so long will wars, with all the tragedy they involve, recur from time to time.

In the West our sisters are thinking deeply over these problems. Progressive organisations are trying to find a better way of adjusting human and national relations in the post-war world. The great forces arising in the world today will ultimately help to shape the new world which will come into being after the war. It is in planning for a new world order that women should take their share, and for this it is necessary to know how we shall approach the problem. Unless we can define our attitude today it will not be possible to share in the task of building up tomorrow. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, in a statement issued a few months ago, has reaffirmed its belief as follows: "War is a crime developing a vicious circle in which violence begets violence and reprisals." It has declared itself in favour of a world order based on a "new attitude of man to man and nation to nation, with a realisation of interdependence and a renunciation of exploitation and profiteering." But declarations to be effective must be implemented by action. The establishment of world peace by the ending of national wars depends on the removal of the causes of wars. They can only be rooted out by the ending of the domination of one country by another and the exploitation of one people by another. Women's organisations should throw all their weight in favour of world disarmament and peacefully labour for the establishment of a juster political and economic order.

I have been a member of the Women's League for Peace and Freedom for several years. I have also the honour to belong to the Indian National Congress whose official creed is non-violence. In spite of the criticism and ridicule which has been directed at the non-violent creed, there is an increasing number of thinking men and women all over the world who believe that if the world is not to destroy itself and revert to barbarism it must ultimately accept the principle of non-violence. As women we have a special responsibility cast on us. We must decide whether we shall ally ourselves to the forces of life, or those of death. Are we going to join the group that by their acquiescence make wars possible? Shall we bear sons only that they may murder other women's sons and help to maintain a system which stands self-condemned? Or shall we raise our united voice

in favour of a brave new world where human life and human liberty receive the respect which is their due, where progress and security are within the grasp of each individual? The choice is before us. The future, not for women only but for humanity as well, is what the women of today make of it. Let us not treat this matter lightly.

If you will bear with me I would ask you to turn your attention for a moment to conditions in our own country. While Britain fights for democracy and the liberties of small nations, freedom is denied to India. The people of India have declared their opposition to the Fascist nations and their sympathy with the progressive forces of the world but how can there be any real co-operation except on terms of equality? The authoritative nature of British rule in India contradicts Britain's announcements about her war aims. Unless the right of India to freedom is recognised how can the people of India fight to preserve the freedom of other nations? Unless it is recognised that the new world must be built up on the co-operation of a free people in a free world order what ultimate good can come of a victory even by the so-called progressive powers? These are the questions which face us. Indeed the whole world seems to have become one gigantic question mark which challenges us to find an answer.

Let us now look at the work we have been doing. The Conference during its 16 years has enlarged gradually and there has been a genuine effort to extend its scope and utility and to bring into its fold women in all walks of life. But if it is to be a living organisation, one which carries weight and can claim to be truly representative of the womanhood of India, a much greater effort has to be made to widen our scope still further and to join forces with other progressive organisations which work for women. Our outlook, too, must become wider and, though I do not wish the Conference to become involved in party politics, I do believe the days are gone when a group or organisation can keep itself aloof from current political thought. Politics today have become part of our daily life, we cannot avoid their implication. We must therefore understand the difference between narrow party politics and those larger issues of nationalism which face us. We must not let ourselves be sidetracked by things which seem important but which are, after all, only a part of the bigger issue. Any piecemeal solutions can be nothing more than a patchwork, but a solution of the basic issues will automatically solve all our smaller problems. We should, I think, ally our Conference with all those progressive movements in India which work for liberty—the liberty of the individual as well as the liberty of the country. Similar ideas have, I know, been expressed in

the Conference before. I reiterate them because I feel it is important for us to face these questions boldly now and give a clear lead to the women of our country, if we wish the Conference to be a vital force.

I have the privilege of contacts with women of various groups. Many of them have expressed their inability to work with us on two grounds—first, because they consider our outlook restricted, and secondly, because they felt that too much emphasis was being laid on the problems of women and not enough on those difficulties which woman faces as a human being. There is some truth in these charges. Today woman faces the world as an individual for the first time. Her problems are the problems of society, and while fighting for those legal, civic and economic rights, which are still denied to us let us not forget that the whole question of rights for women is closely linked up with the social question which, in its turn, is part of the larger political question. Unless we approach our work from this viewpoint the majority of women will not be in a position to take advantage of any increased opportunities which may be offered to them.

I believe in co-ordination. We have at present a number of organisations which are working for women in India. There is overlapping in the work that is done and sometimes quite unnecessary opposition and jealousy. Our country is big enough for a number of organisations having similar aims to function side by side amicably and in best interests of women. But unless there is some co-ordination of activity progress must be delayed and slow. We have lost much time already; we cannot afford further delays without seriously risking our future. I would like to see a co-ordination of all women's organisations under some federal scheme. It should not matter that the work done by different groups is on different lines or if the same problem is approached from different angles according to local needs. I realise this is not an easy task but it would bring about better results in the work and create a closer bond between the women of our country.

In the past we have been in the habit of passing a number of resolutions. We have tried to deal with many questions and although we have achieved a degree of success in several matters many things necessarily have progressed slowly. I have always thought that if we could deal with one or two problems each year we could forge ahead far more rapidly. I shall therefore venture to suggest once again that instead of endeavouring to tackle a variety of problems we should concentrate this year on those which are of special significance and see to what extent we are able to work them out. The report of our annual session would perhaps be a less

imposing document minus the resolutions which add to its bulk, but I feel certain we could achieve more. We have in the past worked for the removal of illiteracy. This field is so vast that our results have been negligible. If we could concentrate for at least one year on this as the major item of our programme in every province we could achieve worth-while results. A mass drive against illiteracy started by the Conference would instantly invoke a response from other progressive groups and would help us to establish closer contacts with the villages and with the workers in fields and factories. This would also be a means of educating women in the ideals of the Conference and developing in them a sense of their own responsibilities.

We have before us a scheme for a model village. The idea is good but there are many difficulties which will have to be faced. Such a project requires the undivided attention of those who take it up. For good work we require trained whole-time workers who will live in the village. I am not sure, however, if even then we can do anything of real value. The main problem of the village is one which the villager must solve himself, through a desire for better conditions. We can of course help to arouse consciousness. In the village project besides literacy, medical aid etc., which will naturally form part of any such scheme I would like the question of cottage industries and co-operatives to receive the attention which is their due. Their importance cannot be stressed too strongly. For an agricultural country the cottage industry becomes a vital necessity—not as the rival of big industry but as a supplementary force which can help to solve the economic problem of the villager. The work done by co-operatives in China has shown how valuable their contribution can be to the national life of a country. We should therefore remember these two items when working out our village project.

This Conference has already expressed its views on the recommendations of the Hindu Law Committee. While we have appreciated the recommendations and are glad that the work of codifying the law of succession has been taken up we must not forget that piecemeal legislation is of little value and what is urgently required is the codification of the whole of Hindu Law based on the principles of equality of status between man and woman.

And lastly may I appeal to you, my friends, to do your bit to remove the hatred and suspicion which have crept into our midst. We have been conscious of this unhappy state of affairs and our Provincial Branches have discussed the question from various points of view, but we have not

done anything to create a better atmosphere. An organised effort on behalf of the Conference to restore harmony between the communities will, I am sure, have far-reaching results. India belongs to all of us. Her greatness is the result of that culture to which each sect and religion has contributed. Her past glory as well as her present fallen condition are the handiwork of her children. We cannot evade our responsibility by pleading other activities. Some of the work we have done may have value, but if we can contribute even in a small measure to the unity of India we shall not have lived in vain.

Cocanada,
29-12-41,

VIJAYA LAKSHMI PANDIT.

Shrimati B. Kameswaramma read the Telugu version of the President's address. The President then requested the Maharaja of Pithapuram to address the Conference.

The Maharaja of Pithapuram, who on coming up to the dias was garlanded by Sri M. Pallamraju, President, East Godavari District Board, amidst applause, said :—

Respected Sisters,

First I must thank you for the great honour you have done me in asking me to attend this Conference and speak. It is a pleasure and privilege to address this august assembly, It is double welcome to me as I am keenly interested in the welfare of our women. There can be no real and lasting advance unless women rise along with men. Moreover you have got the inalienable and sacred duty of bringing up your children, the future generation of India, and moulding their character to make them worthy citizens of our great and glorious country. Why should any facilities and privileges enjoyed by men be denied to women? You do not lag behind men in any important respect. You are amply endowed with noble qualities of head and heart. Famous for your finer feelings, you eminently merit men's admiration. Here you are easily our superiors. Your kindness, affection, gentleness, charitable disposition, powers of endurance and patience are very well-known. Motherly love is unrivalled. That is your sole monopoly. In times of need it is the mother in you that comes uppermost and shines most brilliantly. It is you that can nurse a sick child or an adult in a proper manner. It is only given to women to nurse satisfactorily. The work of men, however good it may be, cannot be quite up to the mark. There is something lacking in them. Blessed and thrice blessed are you. In morality you excel and chastity you stand

supreme, You are religious in the real sense. In intelligence it is my personal and well-considered opinion, that you are our betters. At any rate you are our equals.

Let us see how you stood in the golden days of yore. You received good education and achieved brilliant results. Several women composed some of the Vedic Hymns of our Rig Veda—the most ancient hymns known to humanity. Well versed in Upanishads, some of the greatest repositories of the spiritual wisdom in the world, they took part in religious discussions of the highest order on perfectly equal terms with men. The honoured names of "Gargi" "Maitreyi" amongst others stand prominent to this day. It is even said that once a woman bent on household duty was passing by a place where a teacher was explaining some Sutras to his pupils. He misinterpreted some portion. The woman noticing it questioned him. The man admitted his mistake. This story shows how erudite some of the women were. Profound devotees of a rare order leading sublime lives existed. As mothers and wives they gave sound advice to kings and influenced them for the benefit of the country. Even when they were independent queens, they ruled their people in a highly creditable manner. For morality they were unexcelled. Unsurpassed they were in chastity, the highest of virtues. As warriors they showed marvellous valour and covered themselves with glory. What was more, they sent their gallant sons with their blessings to the battle-field asking them to return as victors.

They were proverbially kind and of charitable disposition. In different fields of life they showed their great worth. Thus women won the respect of men. Such was the happy position of women in the good old days.

Unfortunately, afterwards, there came the dark period. The rot set in, society deteriorated and selfish men deprived women of facilities and denied them opportunities and kept them down.

Fortunately for our country, of late we have been seeing hopeful signs. You, women, have been receiving education on a much larger scale than before although the percentage is still very small. You are acquitting yourselves with distinction and honours. Several of you pass in the first class. There are others who passing in the first class stand first in the University. Even in Science you can shine. Recently in a medical examination a girl passed in the first class standing first in the University. She seems to have won 20 prizes. Only the other day Sir C. V. Raman, perhaps the greatest Scientist living, said "I think they (women) will achieve what even men perhaps have failed to do. Women have one quality—the

quality of devotion. It is one of the most important passports to success in science." Thus you have been better than men in many cases. These results are all the more significant when we realise that the number of educated women is very much smaller than that of men. All honour to you !

India is not wanting in poetesses of a high order. An excellent living example is my respected friend, Mrs. Sarojini Devi. As an orator too, she occupies a pre-eminently high position.

Ladies are not lacking in courage. We read that in England they are working well in War Services and that in Russia they are actually fighting along with men against hordes of men of Germany. Lady Astor said in the House of Commons that in many instances women stood shell better than men.

In the social sphere your work is simply splendid. Let me mention the most out-standing things. The Brothels Act is the outcome of the creditable efforts of that genuine champion of your cause, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy, when she was in the Provincial Council. Nobly and assiduously did she endeavour to have the abominable Deva Dasi system abolished. Many are the ways in which this good lady has been doing creditable work. We have every reason to be grateful to her.

Then there is my esteemed friend, Mrs. Radhabai Subbarayan. She has been doing invaluable work in the Central Legislative Assembly. May her endeavours bear fruit !

We see how some of you have been rendering meritorious services as members of the Provincial and Central Legislatures.

Begum Shah Nawaz did useful work at the Round Table Conference and is now working as a Member of the National Defence Council.

Our honoured President, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, was the first lady who worked as Minister in a Provincial Government. I am sure that the work turned out by her was more valuable than that of her colleagues. I hope that in the near future there will be at least one lady as a Minister in every one of the Provincial Governments. May we also see, ere long, a lady as a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council !

Thus it can be seen that many of you have been doing very valuable work in the interests of the country in various spheres of life. I wish to see more members of the gentler sex in Government services.

Women are better fitted to keep the house than we.

In the religious field two of the most outstanding figures are the late Dowager Maharani Sunity Devi of Cooch-Bihar of revered memory, and the Dowager Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mayurbhanj, both of them worthy daughters of that profound devotee, Brahmananda Keshub Chandra Sen, the famous Brahma leader. The noble work of these two ladies of sublime spirituality is of the highest value. May we have more women like them!

In almost all respects you are our superiors. You are experts in many occupations from house-keeping upwards. Miserable is the life of the man who has no mother, wife or daughter in the house to look after him. Your spirit of self-sacrifice, without any ostentation, is admirable indeed. The wife is called the better half of the husband. Verily it is so in general. It is a compliment highly merited. There is a Sanskrit verse which says in effect as follows. "A virtuous wife is like a minister in important matters, a maid-servant in service, Lakshmi in looks, Rambha in bed, the earth in patience and like a mother in caretaking." This shows how she can shine in various aspects of our avocations.

Permit me to refer to a few of the items of the noble work you have set for your services. Prevention of cruelty to children is one of the most important items. It has the whole-hearted support of my humble self and I am sure, many other persons.

Regarding marriage, your endeavours are very good. Dowry system must be done away with. When a man and a woman love each other this wretched dowry should not come in the way of their union. Pure love is the criterion. To demand any dowry is very mean. To do this after having promised not to do so is worse. To demand this after the betrothal ceremony is actually performed and in spite of a promise to the contrary is the worst and the meanest thing. It is diabolical. Wedding should be simple, inexpensive and without any distinction of caste. The problem of divorce is a knotty one bristling with difficulties. From the very bottom of my heart I detest it. When there is some unpleasantness between husband and wife, every possible effort should be made to bring about a reconciliation. This dreadful danger of divorce must be averted at all costs. But if it is found to be impossible to bring about the happy consummation, then the only solution will be divorce. This will be in the best interests of both the parties physically, mentally, morally and spiritually.

Coming to the question of your legal rights and privileges, it is but just that proper provision, with necessary safeguards be made to enable

you to live in reasonable comfort. You are as much human as we men are, and have a right to be happy. Sex should not be a disqualification. May your legitimate efforts prove fruitful! Give us, men in whom you have confidence, the privilege of being of humble service in your attempts to uplift yourselves.

In our Andhra Desa, the twin stars of the first magnitude that voluntarily did yeoman service for your cause, and pioneers in this field, were Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu garu and Raghupathi Venkataratnam Naidu garu of revered memory. They helped girls to receive education, saved young girls of the unfortunate caste from their life of infamy and performed widow re-marriages. In regard to the last item, to achieve their object, they had to fight against tremendous odds. But they bravely persevered and succeeded.

Unsurpassed is the mother's love. There is a pretty little story illustrating this point. Two friends met at some place. When one questioned, the other replied that he was going to a temple. Then the accoster asked, "Why? Have you not got your mother at home?". He meant, of course, that mother is the greatest God. There is also a saying in Sanskrit that there is no God other than one's own mother. Is it not verily true? There is nothing so noble as maternal affection in the whole world. Entirely unselfish, it is absolutely altruistic. Motherly love is supremely sublime, aye, divine.

A virtuous woman is the grandest splendour in God's glorious creation. Esteemed sisters! To you, the noblest embodiments of all that is good and great and the finest fountains of the highest wisdom and virtues, I humbly bow in admiration and veneration. May God, in His mercy, bless with success your worthy work!

Shrimati Kameswaramma gave a gist of the Maharaja's Speech in Telugu.

President: Mr. T. Prakasam will now address the Conference.

Shri T. Prakasham, Ex-Minister of Madras, who was cordially greeted with garlanding by Shri M. Pallamraju, M.L.A. and President of the District Board, amidst loud cheers, came up the dais and, with the permission of the President, addressed the House first in Telugu and later in English.

He said; I thank you for the opportunity you have given me to speak here in this august assembly of the great women of India. I do congratulate the President of the Conference Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

and the Chairwoman of the Reception Committee the Yuvarani of Pithapuram, for the splendid addresses delivered by them. They are short and they contain everything, which very often will not be found in the long addresses delivered by men. The character and the substance of these two addresses conclusively prove that you (Mrs. Pandit and the Yuvarani) have out-distanced and outshone the male leaders in the country; because they are very short and businesslike. Just like it, the whole proceedings of the day from the beginning are run on business lines. I should have liked to hear at some length the lady that just returned after a tour from other countries, but she knew how to conduct herself and she showed us not to be lengthy in our addresses. She is that remarkable lady Shrimati Kamaladevi who has done immense service to our country during her stay in foreign countries for a long time. Again you have got Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan here who seconded the proposal for the Presidentship of the Conference. You have heard her speaking now and how clear and impressive it was. You have got here Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru. She is in charge of the Harijan movement in the country. She has been touring all over India from time to time. The ladies that have gathered here therefore are not merely territorial representatives of India but representatives of different interests and departments of life. Almost every lady that is here today has been working in some department or other specialising herself for the subject. Each one has made a great contribution already to the national work.

Now I shall say a few words about the threatened invasion. The Japanese have practically reached our borders. As I was sitting in Madras City I could feel that I was hearing the noise of the bomb at Rangoon on one side and Penang on the other. We also know how cities like Manila which were declared open cities also had been attacked and destroyed in a merciless manner. At such a critical juncture we should not be spending too much time for smaller matters when we have to devote all our attention to the bigger danger that is ahead. We know that the invader is at our door. It is for this reason that we have been asking Great Britain to leave this country alone so that we might decide our future fate ourselves; but Great Britain is not willing to do so. What is it that should be done now ?

Addressing Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Mr. T. Prakasham said, "Now you are presiding over the organisation which is not a political organisation. What should be done by people when bombs drop. I am appealing to you the President and all sisters here that you should give a

direction as to what they should do if there should be air raids in this land of ours. Advice has been given already that no one should get panicky but should be steady. There should be a direction under your leadership. The women of all the provinces should organise what are said to be "peace-brigades" such as they have been doing already—the unique work they have been doing already during these 20 years of national campaign. Be steady and march on through streets and do all that is necessary. That is thousand times better and greater service than all other peace brigades. Show much ability and courage to carry on protective camps in times of trouble. You must be ready to organise shelters and covers without waiting for their being provided by the Government itself. We are not born to run away when the trouble comes. We are born to serve according to the religion of this country. We are not born to serve ourselves, to serve our families and to feed our stomachs, but we are born for "LOKA SANGRAHARTHAM", that is, for the welfare of the world or people.

When the trouble comes like this, when the country has been keeping aloof from the war under the lead of Mahatma Gandhi preaching non-violence, and when house and property threatened, and when this kind of non-violent attitude was not the religion of the world to which it is preaching, it has been left to the women of India who are assembling under the leadership of Srimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit to proclaim, just as you gave the answer to the women of Britain when they called upon this country to work; that this country has been standing for truth and non-violence.

Most unrighteous methods have been adopted in this war which was not to be seen in the Russo-Japanese war or in the last European war, when there was a respectable way of fighting, and these wars I know in my life-time. Now they go over a city of civil population and destroy it as seen at Manila recently. That is the way of warfare that is going on now. The country that survived became victorious and the country that lost was considered as defeated. That is the proper way of carrying on warfare if that could be justified at all on any account. But in the present war it is not a soldier warfare. There is no question of armies coming from both sides and destroying each other and showing their skill in the art of destruction. Here indiscriminate bombing and destroying properties of civil population has been resorted to almost from the first day of the war. I hope the lesson of this war will put an end to such methods in future.

One thing more, and I shall take leave of you. You have referred in your address about model villages. Allow me to tell you a few words about

the village reconstruction work. Ever since the ministership was abandoned by me I put myself on the village reconstruction work. I took up one modern village called Jogannapalem to begin with. You, Srtmati Pandit told us in your address about the difficulties that would arise in the course of reconstruction work. I would like to say something to enable you to understand that it would not be so difficult when you put yourself to actual work. During the last two and half years I took up one dry village where there was no spinning wheel or loom. I wanted to make that village self sufficient with regard to cloth. I did not employ teachers or paid men. Khaddar Samsthanam which consists of a family of expert spinners of Bezwada have been attached to me for the last 20 years working in their own independent way for promotion of spinning and weaving exclusively. Almost all the members of the family including little children, male as well as female, have been expert spinners. I requested the members of this family to go and settle down in that village and make the people of that village capable spinners. That family settled down there for six months and almost all men and women of the village were drawn to spinning work. It was a remarkable example. Within six months almost every woman, every girl and every young boy learnt how to spin and some of them began learning weaving also. If you go there they are to be seen in their self-spun cloth. The yarn they spin is put on loom by themselves, and they wear the cloth woven by themselves. The looms are also progressive. All this has been placed before Mahatma Gandhi and he promised to go over there if the village was made self-sufficient. Self-sufficiency with regard to cloth was first taken up.

President:—Many of our friends could not come over here. Our Conference invited Miss Anne Guthrie of America; she has just arrived from Calcutta and she will address the Conference.

Miss Anne Guthrie said: Ladies and guests of the All India Women's Conference, I come from America, and have recently arrived in India. As I now come direct from Calcutta I am glad to tell you that Calcutta is not being attacked as you may have heard and that most of us are going about our work as usual. .

I am glad to meet you all here after many years for I visited India several years ago and I carried away with me remembrances of all the beauty that I then saw, and I tried to convey to many people the things of interest here. Now I come again and am glad to meet you of the All-India Women's conference where the women of India are meeting to think and

work out together plans for the uplift of your country and the uplift of the women of the world. When I was here I often asked the people whom I met, "Who are the women who are doing interesting work in India?" Again and again I was told that it was the women of the All-India Women's Conference who were helping their country. To-day I am here after coming from the United States, and after living in South America, Philippines and I am happy to be here with this large assembly.

As an American I come with the greetings of my country to you. I am glad to tell you that many people of my country the United States, take interest in your problems and are following the work you do.

As the General Secretary of the National Committee of the Y. W. C. A. of India, Burma and Ceylon, I bring to you greetings on their behalf. Also I bring greetings from various groups in other parts of the Far East. Our Y. W. C. A. of China, your neighbour, would wish me to bring their greetings to you and also the Y. W. C. A. of Manila. There is also a National Federation of Women's Clubs in the Philippines Isles. The people in China and the Philippines are suffering under the attacks of their enemy and are suffering much on account of this Pacific War. These women are not feeling the safety and security that you now have here. I hope you will think of them in their hours of suffering for they all follow your work and they extend to you their goodwill. May your Conference be a great success. I am happy to have my dream of some day attending one of your gatherings come true to-day.

Mrs. Renuka Ray (Delhi) said: President and Friends, the pleasant task of proposing a vote of thanks to all those who have contributed to make this evening a success - and the Session in Andhradesha a memorable one - devolves on me. To all of us who have come as delegates from different parts of India, this Session will remain enshrined in our memory. On behalf of the Conference I want to express our gratitude first and foremost to the men of Cocanada and Andhradesha whose representatives have contributed so much to the success of the evening. I speak first of the men - for I want them to understand that our organisation is not and has never been of an ultra feminist nature. We are only too anxious to render our thanks to those Indian men who have so gallantly helped the women's cause in India and made our way so much easier. It is not rights we fight for, for any inherent virtue of their own, but rather that we may be enabled to do service to our country side by side with our men. The genuine sympathy and liberal outlook towards the women's cause

expressed by the distinguished men who have spoken to us in this memorable hall today embodies the essential unity that there is in India between men and women who are working for a common cause – the regeneration of their motherland. It has always been the custom of the A. I. W. C. to have distinguished men of the place in which they meet to address them on the opening day of the Conference. On a common platform today, we have a distinguished and liberal Maharajah – the Maharajah of Pithapuram, well-known for his interest in the women's cause and his own contribution for their education in this city – and a Congress worker of established fame, noted for his self-sacrifice in the cause of country, namely, Shri T. Prakasham – both showing their genuine sympathy with us. Surely it is an augury of better times to come out of the discord and disharmony which prevails in our country today, when we find that we are able to work in so much unison with men who come from different stations in life to support us wholeheartedly as they have done.

To the women of Andhra Desha who, under the leadership of their chairwoman the Yuvarani of Pithapuram and their indefatigable Secretary, Mrs. Kemeswaramma, have worked so willingly and contributed so largely to make this session a real success, we owe a debt of deep gratitude. I cannot go into details of the names of all the women who are working so hard but I want them each and everyone to know how much we appreciate all they are doing for us as we understand only too well what it involves in work and sacrifice. I must make mention too, of those women who have come from different parts of Andhradesha in large numbers to attend this meeting. Their encouragement and enthusiasm will be an inspiration to us and spur the delegates of the Conference to greater efforts. Their co-operation has made the Cocanada Session a memorable one.

And now I must thank first those delegates who have been able to come in spite of the troublesome times – and though many have been unable to come – let us hope that those of us who are here will be able to contribute so as to mark another step forward in the work of the Conference. Of our retiring President, Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, whom all of you know so well for her tireless devotion to the work of the country – a woman who has worked so hard for her poorer brethren – what shall I say. I haven't the words to express the gratitude we all feel for the time and energy she has given to guide us during the past year, and we know that though she is no longer our President, we can count

on her help and guidance in the future. Of our new President whose inspiring words we have just heard - I can only say that it is a historic occasion for us when Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit becomes our President.

Last but not least let me express our thanks to the General Secretary, Mrs. Urmila Mehta. Hers are the most arduous duties. The success of our work throughout the year depends so much on her. I will not say more, for I hope that she will remain on and take up the same office in the years ahead of us.

The Conference then adjourned till the next day.

ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE.

First Sitting-30th December 1941.

8-45 A. M. to 12 Noon.

The first sitting of the Plenary Session of the All-India Women's Conference commenced at 8-45 a. m. on Tuesday the 30th December 1941, in the Quadrangle Hall of the Pithapur Raja's College, Cocanada, with its President, Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, in the Chair. The big Hall and sides were fully occupied by delegates and visitors (women only), and equipped with microphone arrangement.

The President: Friends, we shall now begin the proceedings. You notice before your eyes the world moving fast. The thinkers of all countries are thinking of big problems. I think it would be a good plan not only for ourselves but it would serve as useful propaganda for others too if we could do things in a business-like fashion. Therefore I invite you all to co-operate with me to carry on our work efficiently in the coming year.

Secondly, I would like to place before you certain items of our programme which we have to take up from year to year and see that they are properly worked out in our various constituencies. Many of the items of our programme are constructive such as literacy work, Harijan work and work connected with general welfare, adult education and public health.

Speaking on behalf of my constituency, I am able to inform you that we have undertaken several things; and although in our Annual Report there is mention of many such things I feel that the combined result is very poor. I think it would be a good plan for the members of the various

constituencies to see on which particular item they should concentrate; it does not mean that every other item of work should be shelved. I do not wish to be understood to suggest that particular problems should be dealt with by particular constituencies only. Every constituency will have to deal with all problems though it would be very useful if each constituency specialises in tackling any particular problem which it can do more effectively than others. We received a message from Mahatma Gandhi yesterday regarding our programme for social reconstruction. We are aware of it and the progress we have made in the past few years speaks for itself. Most of the items of Mahatma Gandhi's programme were adopted by us years ago and I need not emphasise the urgent need to work them out. I am sure that this effort should be made not merely in one constituency but in all our constituencies. This is the task before us. As regards the Village Programme the details will be dealt with later on.

I request all members to take an energetic interest in all these problems in their various constituencies and to understand their implications social, economic and otherwise. It is worth while for us to set about our work in the right spirit and do it and see that some progress is made. Then we will be able to state precisely that so much has been done and we will also be able to satisfy everyone with accurate facts and figures.

Now, the General Secretary will make some announcement.

The General Secretary, **Shrimati Urmila Mehta**, announced that the delegates should hand over their nomination papers before noon and that only one Group meeting - it is the Special Group dealing with Civil Liberties question - would be held at 1-30 p. m., and that all those delegates interested in this question might attend that Group meeting. The same was stated in Telugu by **Shrimati B. Kameswaramma**.

The President next moved the following resolution :-

"This Conference puts on record its deep sense of loss at the passing away of the great poet and philosopher **Dr. Rabindranath Tagore**. He was a liberator of all suppressed humanity and a great advocate of the cause of women. **Vishwa Bharathi** is the legacy he has left to India and it is the duty of every Indian to support this institution in memory of its founder."

The resolution was carried, all standing.

Shrimati Kamalamma H. Dasappa of Mysore State, Special Member in Charge of Indigenous Industries, who was called upon by the President, presented her Report on Indigenous Industries to the Conference.

Report on Indigenous Industries, 1941.

Mrs. Kamalamma H. Dasappa, Member-in-charge.

It is usual to call for the reports of Indigenous Industries from the branches. But this year I did not do so. I got reports of Industrial Departments of various Provinces and States which will give full details of the Industries that are carried on in the provinces and of what the Government are doing for their promotion.

Every cloud has a silver lining and this war too has one. It has given a fillip to our industries, though in a limited way. The Government of every Province and State has sanctioned large sums for the research and development of Indian Industries and formed committees to investigate the matter. I would suggest that members of the All-India Women's Conference and its branches would take interest in what their Governments have been doing and to co-operate with them and help the promotion of indigenous industries. The words of Mr. A. V. Ramanathan, at the opening of the Khadi and Swadeshi Exhibition held at the Mahila Seva Samaj, Bangalore, will apply not only to Mysore but to all Provinces. He said, "As a Minister in charge of Industrial Portfolio I am glad I am here. The Government are keen on developing Home and Cottage Industries. They have constituted a Cottage Industries Committee. They have set apart a fund for the purpose. The Samaja and other institutions throughout the State have done and are doing laudable work in this direction. They impart instruction in home industries, young and old, in arts and handicrafts suited to their respective temperaments. We want them to increase their activities. Exhibitions, such as the one you have invited me to open, help to kindle enthusiasm and raise standard of performance I hope that the Mysore Ladies Conference with the active co-operation of the various Samajas will facilitate the setting up of a Sub-Committee to focus attention on industrial work among ladies in general and gosha ladies in particular."

I hope our people would seize the present opportunity offered by the war and develop their industries to the utmost extent possible. From the visits I have made to various Rural Welfare Centres, I learn that the people are too apathetic and lazy to carry out the instructions given to the workers by experts. To give you one simple example, at the Deepavali

Khadi and Swadeshi Exhibition held at the Mahila Seva Samaja, Bangalore, the Khadi Stall was very poorly equipped and on enquiry it was learnt that there was no supply and enough cotton was not available.

At my visit to the Closepet Welfare Centre (Mysore) the Officer in charge said that cotton could be grown very profitably in "Ragi" fields and it should be sown a month earlier than ragi. But our rayats are too lazy to do sowing twice, once cotton and a month later ragi. They would sow both at the same time and be content with the meagre income they get.

With all the genuine efforts that the Governments have been doing for the development of our industries, with a few exceptions every one of them has invariably committed one mistake, that they have not taken women on their committees. Even in the most progressive state of Mysore it is so. Men forget that women have a special contribution to make in every field of human activities and their co-operation will always be helpful. Pioneers in rural work and industries have always spoken highly of the co-operation of women.

Now I appeal to you all, when you go back to your provinces, to get yourselves on the various committees formed for the development of industries, whether of the Government or of a private body and help the production of not only manufactured goods but also the production of raw materials. Several states like Kashmir, Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda, Travancore have sanctioned large sums for the promotion of Indian Industries. I have to mention here that though the word "Swadeshi" has been dinned to our ears for the last sixteen years, what we have done in encouraging indigenous industries is far from satisfactory. Except a few individual members of the All-India Women's Conference, the Conference as a whole, I regret to say, has not shown much inclination towards Swadeshi. Now due to war the prices of Khadi and Mill cloth, hand made paper and machine made paper are almost the same. The office of All-India Women's Conference can use only hand made paper and the Roshni can be printed on hand made paper and thus show others to follow their example and learn that Nepal, Gwalior and Hyderabad Governments use only hand made paper. From personal experience I can say, as I use only hand made paper for office work and also for my private purpose, that hand made paper does not cost at all much. I appeal to the A. I. W. C. to pay a little more attention to this branch of their activities. This is more vital than any of their propositions, as it helps the earnings of the poor and is the easiest to practise, as it neither requires the religious sanction nor the Government permission. It is only in us and within us to help the indigen-

ous industries and thereby help the country's prosperity. It is a source of gratification that the A. I. W. C. has taken up the question of rural reconstruction and the development of indigenous industries will automatically follow. The conference is aware that this village Project is a colossal one and has to face many difficulties. But as our worthy President said in her speech yesterday "We cannot ignore a question because it is difficult."

President: Mrs. Hannah Sen will present her Report on General Education.

Mrs. Hannah Sen, Directress of the Lady Irwin Home Science College, New Delhi, and Special Member-in-charge of General Education, presented the following Report to the Conference :

Report on General Education 1941.

Mrs. Hannah Sen, Member-in-charge.

In presenting the 1941 report for General Education I should like to state at the out-set that, at the time I took charge of this portfolio, there appeared to be no office records of the work initiated by my predecessors. This naturally frustrated my attempt to secure continuity and I was compelled to break fresh ground. The Memorandum of Important Resolutions, however, published in the Report of the Fifteenth Session of the Conference, proved to be a valuable document for reference and, in my half-yearly Report as well as at the half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee, I drew the attention of all members to the sections bearing on General Education. I suggested that, as the range of activities was so varied, it would help the constituencies if some of the more pressing problems were interwoven into a simple and definite programme of work for the year. Otherwise, apart from the relatively widespread efforts in the direction of literacy and adult education, little would be done.

Pursuant to the discussions that followed at the Standing Committee meeting, it was decided to include the following topics for the group meetings on education, so that they might later serve as a basis for work in the Branches :—

- (a) Minimum period for primary education.
- (b) Employment of married women as teachers.
- (c) Medium of instruction in Schools and Colleges.
- (d) Composition of secondary board of education.

The selection of these themes rose out of certain incidents that occurred in different provinces and became the occasion for much expression of public opinion and sentiment. The Sind Government set up a non-official Committee to draw up a suitable curriculum for primary schools and reduce the course of primary education from 5 years to 4 years. In the Punjab, the official report on education contained adverse comments on the employment of married women as teachers; and again in the Punjab the subject of the medium of instruction in educational institutions led to some measure of controversy. While in Bengal, the Secondary Education Bill caused several educationists to view with concern the possible danger of the communal virus entering into the composition of Secondary Boards.

Some of these problems formed part of the programme also of the All-India Educational Conference held recently in Kashmir and on the subject of women teachers a clear-cut resolution was adopted by them namely,

“This Conference protests against the tendency to eliminate married women teachers, administrators and inspectresses from educational work in several provinces, and recommends to the authorities that in matters of service no discrimination should be made as between married and unmarried women.”

Some time in September I circularised the Branch representatives and other Standing Committee members on the educational topics chosen for discussion at the Annual Conference, and I requested them to send me their considered views with appropriate data, and copies of literature, recent bills and legislative enactments, and also copies of the sections of their annual reports relating to the educational work undertaken by their respective constituencies. Acknowledgements were received from Calcutta, Bombay, Cochin and West Bengal. The last three Branches forwarded also statements of their view and relevant portions of their reports. An analysis of their replies showed a general consensus of opinion on the first two of these controversial issues.

For primary education the optimum period was given as 4 to 5 years varying in accordance with the entrance age, being longer for the younger child and shorter for the older child. In regard to the employment of married women, the branches felt that marriage should not act as a disqualification, and that the real test should be efficiency of work. Indeed

one of the replies suggested that in co-educational schools suitable married couples preferably should be engaged and that to quote from her note—"women teachers who are married and mothers can tackle children better."

Where the medium of instruction was concerned, the opinions offered were varied. "Instruction should be through the mother tongue," wrote one member. Another declared that it must be in the "language of the majority in that region;" and the third feared that "in Colleges and in still higher studies, English would have to remain the medium of instruction for some years to come."

For the fourth problem, which affected Bengal primarily, the reply of the West Bengal representative was to the point. She averred that the Secondary Education Bill of Bengal had been vehemently criticised on the platform and the press, because it provided for election to the Secondary Board of Education on a communal basis, and was thus expected to result in much communal bitterness. It was fortunate, therefore, that the Chief Minister of the Bengal Cabinet, out of deference to public feeling, decided to drop the Bill.

Provincial and other official reports on education appeared during the year. These and the reports of our Branches re-affirmed the growing public interest in education and the steady breaking away from the old shackles of orthodoxy and worn out customs. The number of educational institutions of all types increased and deeper attention was paid to some of the aspects, that were rather neglected in the past, such as rural schools, physical culture, domestic science, vocational training and handicrafts. In regard to literacy, the figures published by the census authorities indicated a rise in percentage from 12 to 18, despite the enormous growth in population.

Before I conclude I must once again invite the attention of the Conference to a problem, which I discussed briefly in my interim report, the problem of university re-construction. The Delhi University is on the eve of instituting a three year degree course in place of the existing four years of post-matriculate studies. The year, thus saved, is to be added to the secondary school course in order to give College entrants a more mature intellectual outlook. The scheme is calculated to have far-reaching effects in that it will lead on the one hand to the disappearance of the Intermediate University Course and on the other to a re-organisation of Secondary Education. This policy of the Delhi University is reminiscent of the recommendations of the Sadler Commission and cannot but have its

repercussions, sooner or later, on other Indian Universities. The arguments in favour of the proposed reform may be briefly summed up as (a) Matriculates will be better equipped for effective and responsible citizenship and (b) University students will be of maturer age and more adequately prepared for and hence more responsive to higher-grade education. I trust that the Conference will give its serious thought to this vital subject and bear in mind the resolution drafted by the Delhi Branch.

President : Miss Leilamani Naidu will now present her Report.

Miss Leilamani Naidu of Hyderabad (Deccan) said :

My report was very brief. I wish to make the honourable delegates aware of the fact that very important constitutional changes were brought in for ratification. These were drafted by the Standing Committee and will be typed and circulated to all the delegates before placing them for discussion. That is all what I should announce.

President : Mrs. Kitty Shivarao will read the Report on "Legislation"

Mrs. Kitty Shiva Rao of New Delhi presented to the House the following Report on "Legislation" :—

Report on Legislation, 1941.

Mrs. Kitty Shiva Rao, Member-in-charge.

It is gratifying to note that the insistent demand of the A. I. W. C. for the last so many years that Government should appoint a Committee to go into the problems of women's rights has at last had some effect, though it must be said that the appointment of the Hindu Law Committee in January 1941 was mainly due to the fact that the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act (commonly called the Deshmukh Act), passed in 1937 and amended in 1938 had created a good deal of legal confusion. In an attempt to clear up matters, private members introduced three more amending bills and two new bills which, it seems, only added to the confusion. The Government of India, therefore, were obliged to refer the Deshmukh Act of 1937 (as amended in 1938) and the connected bills to a Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir B. N. Rau; the other members of the Committee were Dr. D. N. Mitter from Patna, Professor Gharapure of the Law College, Poona and Mr. V. V. Joshi of Baroda, who is the nominee of the Conference.

The following were the connected bills referred to the Hindu Law Committee :—

- (i) The Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Amendment) bill promoted by Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta;
- (ii) The Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Amendment) bill promoted by Mr. A. N. Chattopadhyaya and others;
- (iii) The Hindu Women's Rights to property (Amendment) bill promoted by Dr. G. V. Deshmukh and Mr. Kailash Biharilal;
- (iv) The Hindu Women's Property Bill promoted by Mr. N. V. Gadgil; and
- (v) The Hindu Women's Estate Bill promoted by Dr. G. V. Deshmukh.

My activities as Member-in-Charge of Legislation were mostly confined to the work connected with the Hindu Law Committee. At the President's request, meetings were arranged by all the branches of the A. I. W. C. to urge Government: (1) to enlarge the scope of the Committee by including all questions of women's property rights as well as marriage, divorce and adoption; and (2) to appoint one or two women members on the Committee. With regard to the former it is now clear from the Committee's Report that they themselves had to take a broader view of their terms of reference. As regards the latter, Government did not accede to our request.

The Hindu Law Committee issued a questionnaire (in three parts) which was answered by 19 branches of the A. I. W. C. and several Standing Committee members; in addition, the Half yearly Meeting sent a consolidated reply to the Committee accompanied by a statement containing their special recommendations.

The Report of the Hindu Law Committee was published in June 1941. The Committee have strongly recommended that the whole of Hindu Law should be codified in gradual stages. They observe that "Hindu Law is a spacious structure, with many schools; and that by a judicious selection and combination of the best elements in each the reformer should be able to evolve a system which, while retaining the distinctive character of Hindu Law, will satisfy the needs of any progressive society". The Code which they propose is "a Code which shall recognize that men and women are equal in status with appropriate obligations as well as rights; a Code which, generally speaking, shall be a blend of the finest elements in the various Schools of Hindu Law; a Code, finally, which shall be simple in its language capable of being translated into the vernaculars and made accessible to all."

The Committee have also printed in an appendix to their report the judgment of the Federal Court with regard to the application of the Deshmukh Act to property other than agricultural land. The main question referred to the Federal Court was whether the Deshmukh Act applied to all property or only to property other than agricultural land. When the Deshmukh Bill was passed by the Assembly in February 1937, the Legislature had power to legislate over agricultural land as well as other property. But when the Council of State finally passed the Bill after the 1st April 1937, the Central Legislature had power to legislate only with regard to non-agricultural property, except in centrally administered areas, the legislative authority over agricultural property having been transferred to the provinces.

It was argued before the Federal Court that, in actual practice, the Deshmukh Act had hitherto been operating as if it had been passed altogether under the old constitution, and as if widows had been given a share since 1937 in their husbands' entire property, both agricultural and non-agricultural. The judgement of the Federal Court, however, held that it must be assumed that agricultural land is not included in the term "property" as used in the Act, since the new Constitution did not empower the Central Legislature to legislate over agricultural land in Governors' Provinces. To meet this situation, the Hindu Law Committee have recommended that immediate steps be taken to regain the former position by enacting Governors' Acts in those provinces where the legislatures have been suspended and Provincial Acts in others, so as to bring agricultural property within the operation of the Deshmukh Act.

If complementary legislation is not enacted, the following point might arise: A wife is entitled to a share of her husband's property other than agricultural land; but she is not entitled to a share of her husband's agricultural property, or the income thereof. If, therefore, her husband had mostly agricultural property, she would not only get very little, but might also lose her right to legal maintenance which she had under the Hindu Law before the Deshmukh Act came into force. India being predominantly an agricultural country, this will mean a great hardship to the widow unless her right to legal maintenance, of which the Deshmukh Act at present makes no mention, is expressly left intact.

Copies of the Report of the Hindu Law Committee were sent to all the branches and members who had replied to the questionnaire and to other branches who asked for them. The President Shrimati Rameshwari

Nehru issued a statement on behalf of the A. I. W. C. congratulating the President and Members of the Hindu Law Committee on their excellent report. She supported their recommendations and strongly urged Government to take immediate steps to proceed with the codification of the whole of Hindu Law.

Meetings to explain the Hindu Law Committee Report and support their recommendations were held in most branches. In Simla we had a very successful meeting under the Chairmanship of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur for which opinions on the Report were received from the Rt. Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Rt. Hon'ble Dr. M. R. Jayakar, the Hon'ble Mr. M. S. Aney, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi and Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta and read at the meeting.

As suggested in my Half Yearly Report and agreed to at the Half Yearly meeting of the Standing Committee, all the branches were approached to nominate a corresponding member to the Member-in-Charge of Legislation. I am very glad to say that eleven branches have appointed corresponding members, namely, Bombay, Madras, Hyderabad (Dn), Poona, West Bengal, Baroda, Gwalior, Assam, Nagpur, Andhra and Cochin.

All the branches were also supplied with the names and addresses of the Members of the Central Legislatures representing their constituencies so that women may get in touch with them when need arises.

A summary of the Report was translated into Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu and Kanarese by the corresponding members concerned.

I am glad to report that I have been supplied by the corresponding members with the names of 20 women lawyers in India, residing in Bombay, Cawnpore, Lahore, Lucknow, Madras, Nagpur, Yeotmal, Amraoti, Tanuku (West Godavari Dt.), Ernakulam and Trichur. The names and addresses of these women lawyers were also supplied to the Hindu Law Committee.

Since the publication of the Report, the Hindu Law Committee have drawn up 4 memoranda on the Law of Succession which have already been circulated for opinion to all prominent lawyers including the women lawyers mentioned above.

The main points of the Memoranda are:—(1) that there is to be one uniform and simple law of succession for Hindus all over India; and

(2) that a woman shall not be disqualified for inheritance, nor shall her estate be regarded as limited or inferior, merely because of her sex.

It will be the duty of the Conference during this year to keep up its agitation with regard to our demands for equal status and rights of inheritance, for monogamy and for the right in certain circumstances to dissolution of marriage. Unless propoganda is intensified and public pressure is brought to bear on the members of the Assembly, legislation of the kind suggested above is not likely to be passed. In order to get the full benefit of the proposed legislation at the centre on property rights, I would request the branches to press for complementary legislation in the provinces so that agricultural land may be included within its scope. We are glad to note that Bengal has already introduced a bill to this effect and in Orrisa parallel legislation is under consideration.

I also have to report that the Central Legislative Assembly has passed the Mines Maternity Benefit Bill regulating the employment of women in mines for a certain period before and after childbirth, so as to provide maternity benefit to them. We certainly welcome legislation of this kind, but in this connection I want to point out that while most provinces have passed Maternity Benefit Acts, the Punjab, Bihar, Orissa (proper) and the Frontier Province have not yet introduced such legislation. In view of the absence of maternity benefit legislation in these four provinces, there seems to be no reason why the Government of India should not take steps to extend the provisions of the Mines Maternity Benefit Act 1941 to women in all perennial factories throughout India, instead of restricting them to women in coal mines only.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the branches and individual members for the whole hearted co-operation they have extended to me as Member-in-Charge of Legislation during the year. The nature of the work in these last ten months necessitated a great deal of correspondence, organisation and alertness on the part of the branches, because some of it had to be done at comparatively short notice. There will be a great deal more work required to be done in the coming year, since important legislation is envisaged, and I have no doubt members will continue to take a prominent part in creating public opinion and in rallying round them all the progressive forces in the country.

The President : Mrs. Ray from Delhi will present her Report on Adult Education and Literacy.

Mrs. Ray presented the following *Report on Adult Education and Literacy* :—

Report on Adult Education and Literacy.

Mrs. Renuka Ray, Member-in-charge.

The increase in the figures for literacy in India has not been in proportion to the effort made in recent years to spread education, and taking into account the rise in the census figures for population, the increase is not appreciable at all. The reason lies in the types of literacy work done in the past which leaves no permanent results. We have already gone into the details of the type of education needed for adults and so will not go into details here.

Fortunately the need for adult education work and the implications of adult education as distinct from the creation of literates alone is now being understood in India and efforts are being made by various organisations in different parts of India to introduce it on a widespread scale. Certain Governments too are helping these efforts though a great deal still remains to be done. The Central Advisory Board of Education to the Government of India also considered the matter and have made certain suggestions to Provincial Governments. The Indian Adult Education Journal to remove the misconceptions prevalent and I have been approached by them as Convener of the A. I. W. C. Adult Education Committee to co-operate with them as a member of their Executive Committee.

In spite of this the difference between an adult education and a literacy centre does not seem to have been grasped by the majority of the branches, with the consequent result that few adult education centres are to be found. Of course the times not being normal, it is difficult to obtain the finances necessary for constructive work and this may be one of the reasons for lack of response. A circular was sent out in the middle of the year giving details of a syllabus for adult education centres and I also asked branches to inform me, if they wanted any teachers trained for this work and if so, I could arrange with certain organisations who would give guide training, free of cost, which would be better than no training. No branches, however, have availed themselves of the offer. In the Calcutta Branch this training was given by the Adult Education Society to 3 or 4 teachers.

Bombay continues to lead in the number of literacy centres run by our Branches. Other branches such as Calcutta, Phaltan State, Simla Sub-branch, Alsi in Berar, Gujarat, Andhra, Maharashtra and Surat Sub-Branch

have adult education centres and others, namely, Hyderabad (Dn.), Karnatak, Phaltan State, Moradabad, have literacy centres. But there are many branches who have not organised either adult education or literacy centres. Some co-operate with the efforts of other organisations but this merely means helping the temporary literacy centres which have no permanent value.

For future work, I strongly recommend that each branch should concentrate on at least one adult education centre making it a model one. Either in rural or in urban areas it would not be difficult for a branch to organise one centre based on the whole syllabus for adult education. The help of voluntary workers will be needed but there should be at least one part time teacher trained in adult education methods. There are no existing organisations who would gladly help to train the teachers. The Centre should be so organised that it will be transferred into a club later which its pupils are able to run on their own. This is the only way of giving work permanent value. If each of the branches organised at least one centre, it would be a model to other agencies in the locality who can be persuaded to take up this work. This does not mean that a branch should not have more than one centre but only that every branch could easily manage to establish at least one adult education centre. It would not involve a great expense either. I appeal to the branches to take up this work earnestly in the coming year. The review of the past year shows that with few exceptions this work has not really progressed in the branches. It is unnecessary for me to stress its importance, not only for the present generation of Indians, but particularly in the case of women adults it is necessary, so that the next generation even if it has primary education should have homes where the benefits of education are understood, otherwise it will mean yet another generation, before our people receive the enlightenment.

In these days when there is likelihood of great dislocations in the country and the populace has to be prepared to avoid panic, it is of the utmost necessity that education should be imparted without delay. If centres for educating adults are formed these would be a nucleus for preparing them to cope with the crisis which lies ahead.

Shrimati J. Sitamahalaxmi (Andhra) gave a gist of the report in Telugu.

The President: Mrs. Mazumdar, a Member of Bengal, has not been able to come. Her report on *LABOUR* is here and I shall just read it to you. The President then read the following Report on Labour:

Report on Labour 1941.

Mrs. Sudha Mazumdar, Member-in-charge.

1. One of the interesting features regarding Woman and Child Labour during the year under review is the report on the Administration of the Bengal Maternity Benefit Act, 1939. It appears that the number of factories which by virtue of employment of women were amenable to the Act were 686, and the average number of women workers daily employed in these factories total approximately 51,300. The total number of accepted claims was 3,716, and the total amount of benefit paid was Rs. 1,13,906-3-9. It appears that a prohibitory provision of the Act regarding employment during prescribed ante—and post-natal period has been strictly adhered to in the larger types of factories such as jute and cotton mills and the like. But it is regrettable that very little action has been taken with regard to smaller concerns, particularly those situated in the interior. It is desirable that Government should circularise to the District Magistrates to look into this important matter in their respective areas.

2. The Maternity Benefits Act of 1939 in Bengal needs a few important amendments in order to provide for the actual welfare of the women for whom it is meant. The Act does not impose any responsibility on the employer for medical care for the ante and post-natal mothers as well as necessary help during confinement. Such provision should be made in the Act as has been proposed in the Bengal Maternity Benefit (Tea Estates) Bill of 1941. It should be compulsory for every employer to arrange for the services of a medical practitioner and a qualified nurse for giving free treatment and advice during ante and post-natal periods, also all help at confinements to the women in their factories. It may be added too, that any woman who claims Maternity Benefit under this Act, should regularly attend the Clinic or Hospital, or be under the supervision of a qualified nurse appointed by the employer of her factory. Further, a pregnancy of 28 weeks (seventh month) and onwards should receive the full maternity benefits, if there is a premature delivery certified by the medical practitioner appointed by the employer.

3. The Government of Bengal has brought forward a Bengal Maternity Benefit (Tea Estates) Bill which has been passed by the Legislative Council, and is awaiting consideration by the Legislative Assembly. By this Act the employment of or work by women in Tea Estates has been prohibited during certain periods following the day of delivery and women

workers will be entitled to maternity benefit, which will consist of Rs. 12/- in cash or benefits in kind not exceeding Rs. 3/- in cash value and cash amounting to the difference between such cash value and Rs. 12/-. The work which can be undertaken by women during ante-natal period and ante-natal medical care of workers has been fixed. The work of a woman within four weeks after the day of her delivery, has been forbidden. Payment of benefit in the case of a woman's death should be provided for.

4. The Central Assembly has just passed a Maternity Benefit Bill for women workers in Mines. According to it, the employer shall not employ a woman for four weeks following child birth, and she should get authorised leave for a month before child birth, and when a woman is in continuous employment for nine months preceding the date of her delivery she shall be entitled to receive a payment of eight annas a day, for every day on which she is absent from work, owing to her confinement, during the four weeks immediately preceding, and including the day of her delivery, and for each day of the four weeks following the delivery. The services of a qualified midwife or a trained person will also be available to her.

5. It is to be deplored, that women Factory Inspectors have not yet been appointed in all the provinces, where the Maternity Benefits Act has been enforced.

6. Woman and Child Labour is not permissible in hazardous operations. The hours of work are regulated according to the Factories Act. Women may be employed both in intermittent and continuous process. It is possible that unmarried girls are employed, but no definite information is available. Some employers voluntarily maintain schools for the children of their workers. No person is allowed to work until his or her twelfth year has been completed. No information has been available as to whether there is any saving system. There are only a very few co-operative societies.

7. As far as Bengal is concerned, women workers are recruited both from that province and from outside. There is no means to ascertain the proportion. Their general standard of health is normal.

8. During the year under report I inspected two small coal mines in the mofussil. I found that women excluded from underground work were being engaged in arranging coal on surface, sorting out good and bad coal and loading coal into carts. They were working more than 8 hours a

day, but their wages were only two annas per day. They received no Maternity Benefits. It is hoped that all Provincial Governments will now rigidly enforce the provisions of the recently passed India Government Maternity Benefit Act for women in mines.

9. It is unfortunate that the Bengal Wages Act, 1936, which relates to wages of labourers, does not fix a minimum wage for women and child labour. An official or non-official Bill should be immediately forthcoming to make good this omission.

10. Sometime ago the Government of India offered an initial grant not exceeding Rs. 20,000 as contribution towards any suitable scheme providing alternative employment to women workers excluded from underground work in coal mines. Accordingly the Government of Bengal drew up a scheme to train up, as an experimental measure, a certain number of men and women in *atta* grinding and paddy husking with the help of improved hand-driven machinery. The cost of the scheme would be Rs. 4,750/-. If experience shows that this scheme has been working successfully, it is hoped that it will be introduced in several other centres and the Government of India should then be approached for the balance of the grant offered by them. The Provincial as well as the Central Government should now expedite giving effect to the scheme.

The President : Mrs. Jayashri Raiji from Bombay will present her Report on Rural Reconstruction.

Report on Rural-Reconstruction 1941.

Shrimati Jayashri Raiji, Member-in-charge.

Great interest has been evinced of late in the village uplift work. The various Provinces and States have started uplift work in various villages. It is a good sign that the members of the A. I. W. C. have also started taking interest in this work and have appointed a Special *Ad Hoc* Committee to prepare a "Model Village" Scheme.

In order to gather information which may be useful to this Special Committee, I had sent a circular to the S. C. Members. Mrs. Cousins, Mrs. Kamalamma Dasappa, Mrs. Shantabai Desai from Assam and Mrs. Velayudha Menon, Branch Representative of Cochin have been kind enough to reply to my circular, and I have been able to gather a good deal of information about the uplift work undertaken by the Madras, Mysore, Assam and Cochin Governments.

Mrs. Cousins informs me that in almost all districts of Madras Presidency rural uplift work has been encouraged and taken up by both the Government and by the local bodies and by the Congress Committees as well as by missionary societies. She thinks that the most happy aspect is the enthusiasm of the villagers themselves to improve the conditions in the villages. Mrs. Kamamma Dasappa informs me about the rural uplift work undertaken by the Mysore State. Sericulture, poultry and lace work are some of the cottage industries in the State.

Mrs. Shantabai Desai from Assam gives the information that, besides the Government, private organisations like the Ramkrishna Mission are doing uplift work. The Agricultural, Public Health and Industries Departments by means of propaganda and demonstrations try to help villagers to improve their Agriculture, health and cottage industries. I would like to draw the attention of the Members to the Mass Literacy Campaign, and the Opium Prohibition Scheme undertaken by the Assam Government.

Mrs. Velayudha Menon, Branch Representative of Cochin, has sent a report of the rural uplift work in Cochin. His Highness the present Maharaja of Cochin is an expert in Ayurvedic Science, specially, "poison treatment." The wonderful cures effected by H. H. prove beyond doubt the efficacy of herbs and simple and cheap native medicines within the reach of the poorest. A Central Ayurvedic Hospital was started two years ago in Trichur which proved very popular. Special arrangements are being made to prepare Ayurvedic Medicines such as oils, decoctions, powders etc. This department provides employment for many workers in the villages, who collect herbs from far and near and help in other ways in the preparation of medicines. In many of the villages, Panchayats are running Ayurvedic dispensaries. Another good work that the State has undertaken is the uplift of the depressed classes. Colonies have been started for the benefit of the depressed classes.

Mrs. Velayudha Menon informs that the local industries such as Coir-making and Spinning do not give even a bare maintenance to those who work from morning to evening. There are no proper labour organisations and the exploitation of the poor workers still continues. Mrs. Menon ends her report by saying that the creation of a Village Beautiful seems to be a distant vision, but the A. I. W. Conference has brought many difficult matters within the scope of possibilities. Our merits are to be measured by the selflessness and sincerity of our endeavours and not so much by the extent of our achievements.

The Provinces of Bombay, Punjab, C. P. and Berar and the United Provinces as well as, the Gwalior, Baroda, and Indore States have started centres for training village workers. The Fyzabad Training Camp in U. P. is a centre where fifty women workers are getting training in village welfare work. The Punjab also has got a centre at Lahore for training women village workers. The interesting fact in this case is that this centre is organised by a student of Lady Irwin College, Delhi. The Nuzsafgadh Health Unit near Delhi is a very useful centre for the students of the Lady Irwin College to get practical training in village uplift work. I strongly recommend the authorities of the College to encourage this work of the students.

I have received very useful and interesting literature for doing propaganda work in villages from the Punjab, U. P. and C. P. Governments. Travelling Cinema is also utilised for propaganda. The plan prepared by the C. P. Government of showing the co-ordination of all agencies in Village uplift work is worth studying. I should like to draw the attention of the members to the Scheme of Village Nursing undertaken by the C. P. Government. The useful work done for the masses by the All-India Spinners Association and the All-India Village Industries Association deserve our attention. These two Associations give to the poor villagers the cottage industries according to their circumstances and needs and provide facilities for marketing their goods. The Rural Reconstruction centre at Wardha is experimenting in the various cottage industries and also training village workers. Members interested in the village uplift work are recommended to read the list of useful books pertaining to Rural Reconstruction prepared by the Special Committee.

The President: Lady Rama Rau will present a Report on the Village Project.

Lady Rama Rau of Bombay before presenting the Report said: You perhaps know that last year in Bangalore an Ad Hoc Committee was appointed by the All-India Women's Conference to discuss the subject; that meeting of the Committee was held in Delhi and the Committee produced its Scheme to the Standing Committee this year. That Scheme is now presented here.

Interim Report of the A. I. W. C. Special Committee for Investigating the Project for creating a Model Village.

The ad hoc Committee to draw up plans for a Model Village as suggested by the Standing Committee at its Half-yearly meeting in Bombay (vide decision under Items 36, 37 and 38, page 9, Bombay Minutes) met in

Delhi from the 8th September to the 11th September 1941. The following members were present:—

Lady Rama Rau (in the Chair)	Mrs. Kamamma Dasappa
Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta	Mrs. Zaffer Hussain
Shrimati Jayashri Raiji	Mrs. Hannah Sen
Shrimai Ammu Swaminadhan	Mrs. Sultan Singh
Mrs. Rajan Nehru	Mrs. Urmila Mehta
Dr. Mrs. M. B. Kagal	and
Miss Prager	Mrs. M. E. Cousins (Convener)

The sittings of the Committee were held in the Lady Irwin College, New Delhi.

The questionnaire framed by the Convener had been sent to about 120 representative people and 41 replies were received and these were considered by the Committee:—

1. "This Special Committee of the All-India Women's Conference is of opinion that the time is ripe for the members of the Conference to take their full share in the reconstruction of rural life today. To that end this Committee recommends the A. I. W. C. to undertake the direction and supervision of attempts to improve the living conditions and mental outlook of one specific village, as a first demonstration of women's contribution to Rural Reconstruction, with the aim of multiplying this model as quickly as possible, by adaptation, to all parts of India.

"They recommend that an All-India Women's Conference Village Project Fund for this purpose be raised at once, and simultaneously with the inauguration of such a Fund work should be begun in a chosen village in accordance with the Plan drafted by this Special Committee held in Delhi from the 8th to the 11th September, 1941, for the investigation of this Project."

2. "That this Special Committee requests the All-India Women's Education Fund Association to express its practical sympathy and support with the A. I. W. C. Village Project by contributing a donation to the Village Project Fund, as such work was envisaged by the Pachmarhi Committee on page 10 of its Report when it planned "a new type of education which would be natural and national, and capable of application to

.....rural life." And this Committee further hopes that the Association will give its continued interest and support to the Project as the work progresses."

3. "That this Committee urges Branch organisations of the A. I. W. C. to show their sympathy to the All-India Village Project by contributing to the A. I. W. C. Village Project Fund."

The following draft Plan for the Village Project was also passed :—

Draft Plan for the Village Project.

The Committee visualised that a village with a mixed population of 1000 to 2000 inhabitants should be chosen, preferably with good communications with an urban centre. The areas suggested in order of preference were :—

- (1) Gujarat (for which one of the Special Committee members is immediately available to live in the village as an honorary worker);
- (2) The Centre of India—Central Provinces (Hindustani-speaking);
- (3) South India. A village of afflicted Malabar. A village of women spinners (Moplahs) seems very suitable and has been recommended by a most experienced worker.
- (4) United Provinces. Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit is the President for 1942.
- (5) Delhi; (6) Andhradesha; (7) Maharastra, (8) Tamil Nad.

The replies expected from the Branches to the appeal will prove a test of these and further preferences.

It was considered necessary to have one or more honorary resident workers in the chosen village who could direct and supervise the work for at least a year, with the trained workers. It was considered that Rs. 60 may be spent on salaries and Rs. 40/— per month as incidental expenses. The cost thus incurred would be Rs. 100 per month for this first Model village. According to this scale it was suggested that Rs. 6000 should be the minimum sum necessary for the starting of the Village Reconstruction work in one Centre so that provision for at least five years should be assured.

The work to be established should be planned as a five-pointed star the points representing (a) Health, (b) Economics, (c) Social Reforms, (d) Education, (e) Land Problems.

For this purpose it would be advisable that one of the two paid workers should have been trained in education (basic or rural) including industries, and the other in Health work. It was also suggested that the industry to be promoted in this first village should be one for women workers, and one which should from the start increase the rate of livelihood in the village.

The co-operation of Local Bodies - District Boards and Village Panchayets and other official and non-official bodies - should be sought.

The Committee stressed that the atmosphere of the whole plan should be that of unity and alignment of the workers with the villagers as co-villagers, not as visitors or patrons.

Appeal to A. I. W. C. Branches and Sub-Branchees.

1. The following Appeal was issued by the Special Committee to the A. I. W. C. Branches and Sub-Branchees to find out

- (a) if there is any person, preferably a woman, in its area willing to be a resident worker in a village ;
- (b) if there is a worker who is willing to act as director and supervisor of work under this Village Project ;
- (c) if there is a trained worker willing to undertake such work in an honorary capacity.

2. The Branch is requested to send a report of surveys of specific villages in its area which would be suitable for the Village Project.

3. The Branch is requested to send all this information to the Committee Convener (Mrs. M. E. Cousins, "Ghat View", Kotagiri, The Nilgiris, S. India), before the 1st December 1941.

(Sd.) Dhanvanti Rama Rau (Chairman). (Sd.) Margaret E. Cousins
(Convener).

While reading the Report, Lady Rama Rau made the following observations:—

The work of collecting the data and answers to the questionnaires was entirely done by Mrs. Margaret Cousins and the trouble taken by her in attending to every detail and consolidating all the material obtained, before placing the whole before the Ad hoc Committee is really admirable. Full credit is, therefore, due to Mrs. Margaret Cousins for the Report now placed before you.

(At a place where reference to places to be taken up in order for starting the work,) Lady Rama Rau observed, "Gujarat was preferred for a first experiment because of flood distress in that area".

While explaining the working of the Scheme stated in the Report Lady Rama Rau pointed out that a sum of Rupees Six Thousand was estimated under the scheme for the organisation of work in each model village for a period of five years. It was necessary to guarantee the expenditure for five years at the rate of Rs. 100 a month before embarking on this new work in each village.

At the close of the Report she said: You now realise that this is entirely a new type of work that, we are hoping, the All India Women's Conference is going to take up, and to take up in right earnest. I have been explaining to you why it is necessary to guarantee a sum of Rs. 6,000 for the initiation of such work. It is absolutely essential that this minimum should be assured to us to begin and work the scheme in one village for five years. The money that is collected under this Village Project Fund will be reserved for that purpose. We have also suggested that this work must be multiplied as rapidly as possible. It should not be understood that we are interested only in one village or in one part of India. We should like to see that the All-India Women's Conference Village Project should be established in every part of India. And, therefore, since we have many different Provinces it follows that if this kind of work is to be inaugurated in one village, in each Province, we shall have to multiply that sum of Rs. 6,000 by the number of Provinces. (A question about States). I also include the states when I say Provinces. The necessary specification has been made in the report. Under these circumstances from the beginning there must be the guarantee for the work to be done well and progressively for a period of five years. When the amount of Rs. 6,000 is collected, we must try to multiply the Six Thousand rupees by the number of Provinces and States where we establish such work. I realise that this is a difficult time for everybody to stand up and ask for money. Considering that the All-India Women's Conference is desiring to spread its work to rural areas, we must respond here. You will understand that it is a duty imposed on you to give what you can for the Village Project Fund Scheme so that it may become a success. I will, therefore, before the meeting closes, send round the hat to you and I request you to put whatever you can into this hat. Members of the Standing Committee, Delegates and Visitors who are present at this Conference will please take back the appeal we are making for this type of work. This work will not

only be a contribution but will create the contact with our villages which we are so ardently desiring; and, if my address will be of any use, please note it for further contributions.

Shrimati J. Sitalakshmi gave the gist of the report and Lady Rama Rau's appeal in Telugu.

The President: Our Treasurer, Mrs. Billimoria, has been unable to come from Bombay. The accounts will therefore be presented by Mrs. Doctor.

Mrs. J. R. Doctor (Bombay), presented the Statement of Accounts of the A. I. W. C. for 1941, and after it was duly seconded by Mrs. M. E. Cousins it was passed.

It was then announced that the Delegates should put their nomination papers before 4 p. m. that day in the box kept for them.

The President: "We have two resolutions of non-controversial character. I shall propose them with your permission." She then moved the following resolutions:

Hostels: "We draw the attention of the public and the authorities concerned to the growing number of girls in schools and colleges and the inadequate provision made for properly supervised hostels and urge that the matter should receive immediate attention,"

Control of Prices: "In view of the abnormal rates of the prices of essential commodities and its consequent repercussions this Conference requests the Government, both Central and Provincial, to enforce the control of prices without delay."

The resolutions were explained in Telugu and Hindustani, one by one. They were put before the house one by one and were unanimously passed.

The President moved the following resolution on War and Peace:—

1. "This Conference is of the opinion
 - (a) that permanent peace cannot be achieved except on the principles of freedom and justice equally applicable to all nations and races and without an immediate and fundamental change in the present structure; for a post-war world can be reconstructed only out of policies initiated and operated during the present war;

(b) that Britain's statements regarding her war aims cannot make any moral appeal to the peoples of the world so long as she refuses to alter her present policy in regard to India.

2. "This Conference reiterates its abhorrence of war and declares that if war is persisted in, it must inevitably lead not only to meaningless destruction but also to the deterioration of moral values. It therefore, firmly believes that human progress is possible only in a world free from military domination and based on the acceptance of international disarmament."

The resolution was explained in Hindustani and Telugu. Clause by clause the resolution was put to vote and carried; finally, the whole resolution was put to vote and was declared carried unanimously.

The President: I now place before you some other resolutions of a non-controversial nature.

Resolution on Communal Harmony: "Realising that women have a responsible part in bringing about communal harmony, this Conference appeals to all women to work earnestly for such a unity, so that this communal problem would not continue to be an impediment to India's national progress."

The resolution was declared carried.

Resolution on Scout Movement: "This Conference expresses its appreciation of the Girl Scout Movement as sponsored by the Hindustan Scout Association. All educational institutions and women's associations should help in promoting the progress of this movement and help in the work of providing education in good citizenship to our girls".

The resolution was declared carried.

Resolution on the Village Educated Unemployed: "This Conference is of opinion that the relief of the educated unemployed men and women, which is developing into a grave problem should immediately invite the serious attention of the Government of India and Provincial Governments to formulate a comprehensive scheme for the amelioration of this evil by opening more Vocational Training Centres and Industrial Institutions and by exploring various other avenues, which would absorb at least some of the educated unemployed for the present. This Conference also exhorts the Public to fully co-operate with the Government in finding a practical solution for this ever-increasing

problem. It also draws the attention of the Government to the fact that the gravity of the situation is likely to be greatly accentuated after the war."

The resolution was declared carried.

Resolution on Vigilance Work: "This Conference is of opinion that Vigilance work has now become a recognised line of social work, and it, therefore, recommends to the Government that it may be raised to the status of all other Government services."

The President explained the resolution in Hindustani. She then called upon Mrs. V. T. Lakshmi (Madras) to speak.

Mrs. V. T. Lakshmi said: It is a great privilege that has been conferred upon me to speak a few words on this resolution on "vigilance work" which resolution is so ably moved from the Chair. It is true that I am closely associated with this vigilance work, which is now better known as Moral Welfare Work in the Madras Presidency. You all know, this work has come to stay not only in Madras but in the Madras Province and also in several parts of India. Moral Welfare Work directly consists of three aspects: viz., rescue and reclamation, moral reformation and re-habilitation of such of those unfortunate girls, who fall victims to circumstances, owing to individual and social conditions. Speaking from my own experience in the Madras Presidency, I would like to say that the reclamation work is no longer looked upon with any disdain or fear. It has been sympathetically proceeded with and the public are giving more and more help in that direction. As for the reformation work we have a Rescue and Training home in the Madras City, which is lately placed on a Provincial basis and it caters to all the needs of all unfortunate girls, who have a chance to reform themselves. From the various parts of the Presidency girls come and they are given every chance of reforming themselves; and in the Home they are given an all-round training. Attached to this Home—Stri Sadana—is a Higher Elementary—Arts and crafts School recently recognised by the Government.

So far as the re-habilitation of these girls is concerned, I am not in a position to say anything very bright. I don't think that things are as bright as one would wish them to be. The essential qualities we would require are moral sympathy and co-operation from the public as well as from the Government; and we should have selfless and full time workers in the front. Several ladies, who are graduated from the Universities will have to take up this work. Many feel that this work is not sufficiently constructive in our country. But, I may say, that they are not correct. It is encouraging that

a few are coming forward even now to do honorary social work. But, it is not possible for all of us to do honorary work for long, however selfless we may be and however anxious we may be to render our humble services to our sisters. On this account I would also impress it on you that this work, Moral Welfare Work or Vigilance Work, judging it either from the point of medical or national importance, is of great value and to every right minded citizen of our country, it is very dear and it must be therefore sooner or later placed on a par with other services of the country. I have great pleasure in commending this resolution to you for your favourable consideration.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The President: Now we are putting before you the resolution on "Emergency" and it will be moved by Lady Rama Rau.

Lady Rama Rau (Bombay) coming up the dias said: Madam Chair, we realise that times are extremely critical. This Conference represents all parts of India and all women of all parts of India. During this critical stage something must be said and done by an organisation like ours, because of the dangers that face our country from hour to hour. Because of the situation we have felt it necessary to introduce this "Emergency" Resolution at this stage. It reads thus:

'In view of the critical times, and the danger of air attacks, such as Rangoon has experienced recently, to all parts of India, this Conference resolves that instructions be issued to all its Branches to concentrate in the immediate future on training their members for humanitarian work.

"This Conference is emphatically of the opinion that the duty of the Branches of an All-India Women's organisation is to play their part in developing Centres where their members will be trained to help the citizens in moments of crisis.

"Towards this end it suggests that the following Schemes be undertaken; and that an All-India Women's Conference Voluntary Corps be formed independently of other organisations:

"Schemes of Work:—(a) allaying panic among the masses; (b) assisting in the evacuation of women and children from the threatened areas; (c) arranging for First Aid and Emergency Nursing Courses; (d) facilitating the distribution of food and other necessities in the affected areas; (e) helping in protective measures during and after air attacks; and (f) tackling internal disruption."

Friends, in moving this resolution I would like to draw your attention to the fact that because of illiteracy in our country the slightest disturbance is apt to cause unnecessary panic amongst us. We have seen this in the case of recent riots in Bombay. Those of us who have been in touch with Literacy work in Bombay, and those of us who were carrying on Literacy work found it impossible to persuade women to leave their houses in order to attend the classes even in broad day light, so long as stray cases of rioting were being reported. I feel it is our duty to organise women's committee and sub-committees where there is a real danger, to allay panic, and to help with schemes formulated from time to time for the benefit of those people in those areas that are threatened. I do not think that there is any organisation as suited to working out such Schemes as the All-India Women's Conference. There is the danger that Calcutta may be bombed to-morrow, Madras next day, and Bombay next week; we do not know when this will happen. There is always the possibility before us, and, if we have any strength of character and if we feel that we have any civic duties it is time that we should take immediate action. I propose that we should form into Groups and perform our duties, should any such crises arise. I feel personally that the All-India Women's Conference, because of its all-India character and because of its able leaders, will organise to form an efficient Volunteer Corps members of which will be able to go about the city and help with this work. We are most anxious that this type of work must be undertaken in any part of the city with the co-operation of any other agency, official or otherwise, engaged in similar work; but we are also anxious in this scheme of work to retain the individuality of the A. I. W. C. organisation, and organise ourselves as women of India. I, therefore, propose this resolution and commend it to you.

Mrs. Rajan Nehru (Delhi) ably seconded it in Hindustani explaining the resolution and the dangerous conditions in which men and women and children might be involved on account of this war.

Shrimati B. Kameswaramma translated the resolution into Telugu and gave the gist of the appeal made by Lady Rama Rau.

The President: The resolution is now open for discussion. Those who wish to speak on this resolution will please send up their names to me.

Mrs. Kamalabai Nimbkar (Bombay) who was called upon to speak said: I heartily support this resolution. More than a year and a half ago I joined the A. R. P. as it was the only organization through which one

could serve one's neighbours in time of trouble. The Ordinances since passed prohibit any but A. R. P. workers going out or remaining out at the time of an air raid. Hence, I propose that the words "during and" in clause (e) of the last paragraph be eliminated from the resolution as we will only create unnecessary complications by retaining it.

Under this resolution our A. I. W. C. organization will be able to fill in many of the gaps left by the A. R. P. and I would recommend that all our members take up this new work with the maximum of energy. The biggest need is First Aid and Nursing, both of which can be tackled in right earnest. I am very glad to support the resolution with the deletion of the words "during and".

The Proposer, Lady Rama Rau, accepted the change.

Mrs. Ch. Chandramati (Rajahmundry) said in Telugu :

I have come to support this resolution. I am seeing people in consternation on the eve of real air raid warnings and perilous war conditions. On account of wild rumours now people in the plains and in the mountains are getting panicky. It is, therefore, very necessary that we should do something. I myself am going to join the Nursing training and I hope many of you, Andhra women, would surely join this important humanitarian work and train yourselves beforehand so that you might beneficially render your services to your fellow men and women and children. If you are sufficiently trained you would first be disciplined before keeping discipline around you ; and when you are disciplined you can easily handle the situation and make the people abide by the rules of precautions. You now see how much trouble the A. R. P. volunteers are taking when test air raid whistles are given in making people obey the rules, such as putting out lights, avoiding the appearance in the streets and stopping all traffic during the warning period. If we work according to this resolution we would be contributing a lot for the safety of the people, for removing the panic, for transferring people in an orderly manner and for helping injured people when there is the actual raid, and for so many other things. As I am anxious, so you are anxious, I hope, to bring this resolution into operation immediately and effectively. I don't want to take more time to enlighten you, the Telugu women. But I would only remind you of our brave and heroic men and women like Rana Pratap Singh, Rani Samyukta, Rani Lakshmi Bai, Draupadi and Satyabhama and so many others of historical fame that faced war situations and I would like you to be brave and serviceable at this critical stage.

The President : Mrs. K. Krishnavenamma will speak.

Mrs. K. Krishnavenamma (Cocanada), in supporting this resolution, addressed, besides the delegates, the vast proportion of women visitors and Reception Committee members in the assembly in Telugu. She said: "I address you all to realise the importance of this resolution and the need of immediately working it up. You all know from the speeches on the platform, and the publications in the Press, how the war is progressing and what immense suffering and loss of lives and property are taking place. For this war of destruction Britain and other countries took all protective measures and the people there were given sufficient training to protect themselves and others, and the respective Governments gave the people all the help needed. But, here in India the people are backward, and perhaps they do not know now what war is and what dangers would be caused to the civil population thereby. The present war is entirely of a new technique, causing much distress to whole civil populations and whole cities and villages. Such being the conditions in the war zone, our country is now preparing to meet those conditions. The Government, as far as is seen so far, have not done as much as was done in Britain and the Colonies. It is the Government that should provide air raid shelters and things of that sort. We cannot say what would be done hereafter. We should not, however, be cowardly when danger faces us. By God's Grace air raids have not yet come to our country. Still we must be on our guard and be prepared for all possible dangers and see that our people are saved from them as far as possible.

I, therefore, request you to see that this resolution stimulates you to self-help and self-control. For this, some of us, it is urged, should be trained and it is disciplined training that would help you to save others from unnecessary panic and from dangers, and to heal the injured when it becomes necessary. There is no greater service than to help others that are in need and this humanitarian and philanthropic service, you are aware, is the noblest work that you can do. I once again appeal to you to work in unity and discipline and be serviceable to others by undergoing the necessary training in First Aid and other connected matters. While thanking you for a patient hearing, I request you all not only to support this resolution in this Conference, but also to give an immediate practical support to it.

Miss Lakshmi Kantam (Rajahmundry) who was next called upon by the President to speak, said in Telugu: I am glad to be before you on such an important resolution which enlivens you and stimulates you to

know what you are born for. No greater Bliss and Heaven for you and me than that of being useful and helpful to others: Where there is the spirit of service there is Bliss. We all know that it is God's Will whatever is created, grown and destroyed and whatever is happening. The advent of War now or in the past is no exception to this eternal law. These wars come and go in their own time as God wills it. As every action, deed, or movement offers lessons to us, War also is useful and educative in its own way. It is a dictum and law, and every sage and optimist would ever say, that everything comes for good; only we should realise it. You realise it and you understand all the philosophy and background and the education which the wars of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata would provide and expound, so it is now for us to realise that this present war also would give us and the world good education and revolutionary changes for good. Therefore, war-mongering is not one's seeking and it is not one's attempt that brings about a war. In Nature's course of things wars are inevitable. When such inevitable situations arise, the human nature of bravery and boldness and humanitarian attitudes would surely rise to the occasion, just as we respond to an accident, to a disease etc., for its healing or prevention. For kinds of prevention, healing, constructing, destroying and other workings of life's journey a certain technical kind of education, training and discipline is given so as to make men and women serviceable in the particular department of work. For maternity welfare, child welfare and other kinds of welfare women are trained. Just like it a sort of training and discipline is needed for meeting the emergencies of war to the civil population. It is this that this resolution contemplates and aims at. Therefore, all capable and intelligent women would, I believe, realise the immediate need to help the masses and save them from panic and dangers and accidents, and immediately get themselves for this type of work for war emergency.

The President : Now you have heard the speakers on the resolution who have proposed, seconded and supported. Is this resolution acceptable to you? (Voices of "Yes" from the delegates). Is there any one against the resolution? No, well, the resolution is passed unanimously.

Now, **Lady Rama Rau** wishes to say a word.

Lady Rama Rau said : Considering that this resolution is of such importance I am of opinion that it would not be wise to wait until the Report from all Branches is received, I, therefore, propose that about 200

copies of this resolution be printed immediately and presented to delegates present, so that later on the Branches might work from now, from the very first meeting, and this resolution is brought into operation immediately.

The President then requested the General Secretary to strike for the roll call of delegates in the customary way. Shrimati Urmila Mehta, the Hon. General Secretary of the A. I. W. C., then took the attendance of delegates.

The President: The conference is now adjourned. The Civil Liberties Group will meet here at 1-45 p. m.

The day's proceedings terminated at about noon.

Second Sitting 31st December, 1941—9-15 A. M.

The plenary session of the All-India Women's Conference commenced its second sitting, at 9-15 a. m. on Wednesday, the 31st December, 1941, in the Quadrangle Hall of the P. R. College, Cocanada, with, Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit in the Chair. The visitors' galleries were fully occupied, though the Hall was not over-crowded as on the previous day.

The President: Friends, we are going to begin the Proceedings. Mrs. Ray will now present the Report of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association, on behalf of the Secretary of the Association, who has not been able to come.

Mrs. Renuka Ray said: On behalf of Mrs. Sewa Singh Gill, who is absent, I have been asked to read the report of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association. As you all know, the Lady Irwin College was started as a direct outcome of the desire of our Conference to establish a College for Domestic Science. The A. I. W. E. Fund Association was created to direct the activities of the College and the All-India Women's Conference is strongly represented on it. I will not go into details as I am sure you all know how successful this venture has been, and that this College in Delhi has girls from all over India and there is a growing demand. Due to lack of accommodation the College has to refuse many applicants. I will now read the report of its activities during the year and I am sure that Mrs. Hannah Sen, the Directress of this College, who is with us, will be only too pleased to answer any questions regarding it that any delegates may desire to ask.

**All India Women's Education Fund Association and
The Lady Irwin College Report for 1941.**

Mrs. Sewa Singh Gill, Hon. Secretary.

The year under review marked another period of growth in the activities of the Lady Irwin College and the number of students on the roll. Financial help received from Seth G. D. Birla, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur Saheba and other kind friends made it possible for the authorities of the College firstly to add another practising Cottage, planned on the lines of an average middle class home, and secondly to institute a special Needlework Certificate Course to meet the pressing requests for well-trained teachers of that subject.

Due to the increased accommodation provided by the new Cottage and greater facilities for specialisation, the number of students rose from 116 to 160. As usual they came from many Provinces and States:— Ajmere and Merwara, Bengal, Bombay, Behar, Cochin, Central Provinces, Delhi, Hyderabad, Jind, Jodhpur, Madras, Mysore, North-west Frontier, Orissa, Patiala, Punjab, Rajgarh, Rajpipla, Serohi, Sind, United Provinces and Travancore. Over a hundred candidates had to be refused admission for lack of space, and their disappointment was indeed great.

It is no doubt regrettable that year after year large groups of students have to knock in vain at the College portals. More so because the demand for well trained teachers of Domestic Science is a growing one and cannot be wholly met by the relatively small number of students who qualify from this Institution. Fortunately the Governing Body has become fully alive to the imperative need for expansion. It recently appointed two Committees to draw up plans for further development of the College in regard to its Courses of Study and its hostel and teaching accommodation. It is hoped that financial help will be forthcoming from both public and private sources and that a comprehensive scheme of expansion will be adopted before the next session.

We are happy to note that the urgency and value of good teachers of Domestic Science have been receiving greater recognition from educational authorities, and that selected students have been deputed for this form of study by the Governments of Bengal, Baroda, Bhopal, Datia, Delhi, Hyderabad, Jind, Orissa, Punjab and the United Provinces.

Satisfactory reports have come from various parts of the country of the good work most of our trained teachers are accomplishing in the schools and districts where they have been employed. Some forty-five of

them out of the fifty-eight, who have secured our Teachers' Training Diploma, are at present engaged in the task of raising the school standard of Domestic Science Studies. Thirteen are working in the Delhi Province, six in Hyderabad, six in the Punjab, four in the Bombay Presidency, four in the United Provinces, one in the Madras Presidency, one in Sind, two in Bengal, two in Orissa, one in Indore, one in Datia, two in Baroda, one in Travancore and one in Ceylon. Several other students also taught for a while, but later retired from the profession because of their marriage.

As a report of our College is presented at every session of the Women's Conference, and our previous reports have dealt with most of the major activities of the staff and the students, we do not wish to reiterate in full the several points that have occurred in our earlier documents. A brief mention of them should suffice.

In addition to their usual academic work the students have continued to interest themselves in schemes of social service, rural problems and literacy classes; and among their extra-curricular hobbies greater emphasis has been given to physical culture—both Jogic and Swedish—dramatic entertainments, debates, joint celebrations of important communal festivals and sports. For the second time the College team won the beautiful silver trophy of the Inter-university Debate arranged by the Aglo-Arabic College of Delhi. The College representatives gave a good account of themselves in the Annual Olympic games as well, and secured the Challenge Cups for Badminton Singles, Badminton Doubles, Netball, Deck Tennis and Javelin Throw. In all but two of the other seven events our students were the runners up. The Olympic Challenge Cup for the best institution was won jointly by the Lady Hardinge Medical College and our College.

The members of our Nursing Division also deserve mention. The international situation has brought home to them the importance of skilled nurses, and more attention has been paid to this aspect of our training. Our cadets appeared for the Medallion Examination in Home Nursing and nearly all of them gained distinction.

Perhaps the greatest outstanding event of the year was the Exhibition and Sale help on Founders' Day. For the first time the Annual Meeting of the Association and celebration of Founders' Day took place in the College premises and thereby afforded an opportunity for the staff and the students to arrange a display of their manifold activities. The function was well organised and gained a considerable amount of public appreciation. The products of the Laundry, Housewifery, Cookery and

Needlework Departments had a wide sale and visitors were keen on booking orders for future supplies, particularly of sauces, chutneys and needlework articles.

In our final paragraph we would like to say how happy we were to be in a position to offer hospitality in our College to the Village Project Committee of the Conference. Our staff and students were proud to have had the privilege of such close contact with some of India's leading women and their good wishes and ours will be always with the Committee in the glorious achievement they have set out to attain.

The President next spoke in Hindustani giving the substance of the Report. She then called upon Mrs. Hannah Sen to speak on the subject.

Mrs. Hannah Sen, Directress of the Lady Irwin College, New Delhi, explained certain details of the working of the College reading from the College Prospectus. She said :

Madam President and Ladies, I welcome this opportunity to say a few words about the Lady Irwin College. I brought several copies of the prospectus with me and distributed them widely yesterday. I would request the delegates, who have not received copies and would like to have them, to let me have their names and addresses.

The Report of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association has just been read and it has given you an up-to-date account of the various activities of the College and its increasing recognition by educational authorities. The Association's primary interest still is the College, which it launched nine years ago, with the two fold object of training women to become (a) capable wives and mothers and useful members of society and (b) efficient teachers of Domestic Science.

The College is housed in its own newly built premises, surrounded by beautiful grounds and spacious playing fields. Though the buildings were constructed only three years ago, they are already too small for our requirements. With the rapidly increasing demand for admission and for teachers of Domestic Science, the need for increasing our accommodation has become imperative, and nothing short of doubling the present teaching and hostel blocks will meet the situation.

As stated in the prospectus, three departments of study are maintained: the Needlework Certificate Course of one year, the Home Science Diploma Course of two years and the Teachers' Training Course of one year.

and provision has been made for several "hobbies", Music, both oral and instrumental, arts and handicrafts, shorthand and typing, Indian classical dancing, spinning, photography, physical culture and Ranger Guiding are included in the list.

With a view to stimulate the spirit of service, students are encouraged to hold literacy and general educational classes for College servants and their children. Other forms of useful service also are rendered.

As a further part of their training in social work, students frequently visit a village or villages near by and not only get acquainted with the conditions in which the poor live but also try to give such help as they can in their leisure hours. Third year students are expected to live in a rural camp for at least a week and to attend lectures on various aspects of rural reconstruction.

A knowledge of Hindustani, for students who come from parts of India where such is not spoken, is considered essential. Facilities for learning the same in either the Devanagiri or Urdu script are therefore provided.

Extension classes in some of the regular subjects of the College are held from time to time for the benefit of local domestic science teachers and other women.

The cost of educating a girl at the College is Rs. 500/- per annum for a resident student and Rs. 220/- per annum for a day student. These figures include all College fees and expenditure for stationery, books and overalls.

I think these are the main points that are of interest to you. I shall be pleased to give further information, if required, and to answer any questions that may be put regarding the College.

Shrimati Subhadramma gave the substance in Telugu of what **Mrs. Hannah Sen** spoke.

The President: would delegates like to ask any questions regarding the College? **Mrs. Hannah Sen** will reply.

A question:—How many students are there on the College roll?

Mrs. Sen: There are 160 students on the roll. This number may appear small in comparison with that in a successful Arts College. But

for a Home Science College, where the work is largely practical and thus confined to small groups, 160 is an encouraging figure.

Q. Are there any students of Andhra ? How many Andhra students are studying now ?

Mrs. Sen : We have got some South Indian students. I do not remember the exact number. But I can say that about 20 of our students come from various parts of South India.

In answer to another question Mrs. Sen explained that there was a good deal of conversative outlook in Delhi; and that it was not advisable to permit the students to work in the slums, except under suitable escort. The students, however, were encouraged to carry on social work in the immediate precincts of the College and to acquaint themselves fully with conditions prevailing in the slum areas.

Q. Can a poor man afford Rs. 500/- per annum for the education for his daughter ?

Mrs. Sen : Not usually. For various reasons, University education is still the prerogative of the rich. But the College authorities are most desirous of bringing their education within the reach of the poor and have therefore, instituted some foundation and other scholarships. Scholarships are given also by a few of the Provinces and States to enable girls to study at the College, and one scholarship has been offered by the Association of Headmistresses of great Britain and Ireland.

The standard of fees is to some extent determined by the budget, which must be balanced, if the College is to endure. It is hoped that, with the expansion of the College and the consequent increase in the number of students, it will be possible to reduce the fees, just as we reduced the original fees by Rs. 5/- per mensem a few years ago, when the College showed its first signs of growth.

In reply to the question whether it would be possible to have more Domestic Science Colleges in other parts of India, Mrs. Sen stated that the Lady Irwin College was a private enterprise and it might not be easy for it to extend its influence by the formation of branch Colleges, unless adequate funds were available. But there was no doubt that educationists throughout the country were giving serious thought to the problem, and some of the Universities had arranged for special Domestic Science Courses. Notable among them were Madras, Punjab, Benares and Mysore. In

Banglore and Bombay Domestic Science institutions of a high standard were already functioning and Mrs. Sen believed that other towns also would soon have their special Colleges. The Lady Irwin College had frequently helped educational authorities with advice in regard to equipment and syllabus. It would gladly help again, when required.

The President: Mrs. Hannah Sen is going to place the Resolution on Civil Liberties before you.

Mrs. Hannah Sen said in moving the resolution: I deem it a proud privilege to be called upon to move this resolution - a resolution on Civil Liberties. It represents a right that we prize so very dearly that I consider myself fortunate in having been selected for the task. The resolution runs thus:—

"In these times when the encroachment on national freedom threatens to destroy those inherent individual rights which are so precious a heritage of civilisation, this Conference associates itself with such organisations all over the world, as are striving to preserve the fundamental rights of all human beings, which, among others, are

- (a) the Rights of Association ;
- (b) the Security of Property ;
- (c) the Liberty of speech ;
- (d) the Freedom of the Press ;
- (e) the Freedom of religious worship ;
- (f) the Freedom of street processions and demonstrations ;
- (g) the Right of personal security, such as will guarantee that no citizen shall be arrested or imprisoned unless it be by legal indictment and by process of the ordinary courts of law.

This Conference records its emphatic protest against the attempts to curtail unnecessarily the civil liberties of the Indian people and demands the immediate restoration of all such liberties."

In recommending this resolution to you I wish to make it clear that it does not in any way come into the province of party politics. It pertains rather to something which affects each of us vitally. I say this to allay the fears of some of you, who might think that we are embarking on politics of

an extreme nature. Civil liberties represent those natural and inalienable human rights that we must at all cost endeavour to preserve, and against the infringement of which we must strongly protest. I have been informed that several delegates wish to speak on this resolution. There is therefore no need for me to say more than that I wholeheartedly commend it to you.

Mrs. Kitty Shiva Rao, in seconding the resolution, said: I have very great pleasure indeed in seconding this Resolution. The right of every man, woman and child to civil liberties is really so essential that it is a right hardly second to none. In any country one could sacrifice anything almost except the right to civil liberties. Not only is it essential for us to pass a resolution like this but it is essential that every one of us—every citizen, every man and woman—should go and talk to those who do not think about these things and awake people to the fact that it is something which no country can afford to do without, and which is essential to human dignity as well as the welfare of our country. I happen to come from a country where civil liberties have been curtailed to nil. Demoralisation has been caused to such an extent that even the thought of civil liberties has ceased to exist for all practical purposes. One must see the results of such a state of affairs in order to realise what happens in a country if this right to civil liberties is non-existent. I do not wish to make a long speech here, because we all realise the importance of it without any further explanation.

I should like to add, however, that we cannot be contented only in passing this resolution, but that we shall have to consider it our duty to see that civil liberties may be maintained, and to educate every member of society to stand up for his civil liberty rights and not budge an inch from it.

The President: Miss Wagle will move an amendment to the resolution.

Miss Kamal Wagle (Bombay) moved an amendment to the main resolution to the effect that the words "and above all" should be put before the clause (g). By doing so, she thought, much emphasis would be laid on the demand for right of personal security, which, the resolution, as it was, did not give. She felt that the right of personal security was much more important than others, as the personal security was at stake at the moment and it was time when this right should be stressed emphatically.

Continuing, she said: But unfortunately we see in this resolution that the question of detainees, which we wanted to bring before this session,

is left in the background and we are not even prepared to accept the importance of the issue of right of personal security. Where is the personal security when hundreds of persons are detained without trial? How many of us are aware of the fact that there are thousands of detenees in jails their only fault being their fight for the liberation of their motherland? Why should these people be denied even the farce of a trial, when even the worst type of criminal is tried before a court of law? It is really a matter of shame that when these detenees are in jails leaving behind them their families to face the difficulties, we are not even expressing our sympathies with them. I feel it is the duty of our organisation and specially of the group of Civil Liberties to render them every possible help. Is it not a piece of humanitarian work to be done by an organisation of an All-India character like ours? I request you all to give your full support to this amendment and pass it unanimously."

Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai (Gujarat) seconded the amendment.

Mrs. Sen : Madam President, I am glad that this amendment has been placed before the house and I am ready to accept it for, I realise that though all civil liberties are fundamental human rights, the rights of personal security have greater significance in these days, when it is being so seriously threatened, not only in India but also in those countries which are now under the heel of the aggressor.

Miss Leilamani Naidu (Hyderabad-Dn.) opposed the amendment and suggested that the three words, "and above all", be not included.

The President : The amended resolution is before the house. Any one wishing to speak may do so. But before that I will request Mrs. Hannah Sen to explain the whole resolution.

Mrs. Hannah Sen : I still feel that the arguments adduced by Miss Wagle and Miss Sarabhai are sound, and that the fundamental rights, which have been outlined in the resolution, are not of equal value. I shall give one little illustration in explanation of my point. Take for example, the right of association. If the right of association is removed, what happens to the right of personal security? The right of security still remains. Now consider the right of free speech. If the right of free speech is removed, what happens to the right of personal security? The right of personal security still remains. But on the other hand, if personal security is removed, what happens to the rights of association and free speech? With personal security go the right of association and the right

of free speech. It is now obvious how much is dependent on personal security and how much more important it is. Therefore, I repeat that I gladly accept the amendment.

At this stage the President translated the resolution and the amendment into Hindustani for the benefit of those knowing Hindustani. Mrs. B. Kameswaramma was asked to do so in Telugu.

Lady Rama Rau in moving an amendment said: With regard to the question of importance of Grammar in the wording of our resolutions, I feel it necessary that its importance should not be ignored because the resolutions of this All-India Women's Conference are sent out not only to all parts of India but to the whole world. I also say that all fundamental rights have equal value. It is impossible for us to differentiate between one fundamental value and another fundamental value. To-day the fundamental right that has been enunciated has an extra emphasis perhaps to-morrow because that right is being attacked another would have a greater emphasis. And when we are drawing up a Charter of Fundamental Rights we should not consider the present moment as essential. We should think of not only this Conference but the conferences to follow us and those who succeed us should value what we consider fundamental rights as equal. It is for you to place one fundamental right above another, in the order in which they are mentioned and I would suggest that that fundamental right which you emphasise to-day should be placed first on the list. Instead of having (g) for the Right of Personal Security, have it at the top of the other items and call it (a) if you want now that that fundamental right should be stressed. Now friends, in considering the parts of the human body we consider every part important, but the head lies above all other parts of the body and we also consider it more important as it happens to be the mental guide. I consider that this fundamental right (of personal security) which plays so much importance in the fundamental rights of human beings should head the other rights of the human beings in the resolution as the head of the human body, and we, therefore, place it first and bring the rest under it, giving it the importance you desire. Friends, I hope the difficulties of Miss Wagle and Miss Naidu will be solved by adopting this amendment in the resolution. I propose that clause (g) be made clause (a) and clauses (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) be changed into (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g), respectively.

Mrs. Renuka Ray rising to second this amendment, said: I rise to support this resolution. I don't want to say much. I only say

that the objections of Miss Naidu and Miss Wagle would be met by adopting this amendment. It is a happy compromise without the naughty grammar objection and at the same time giving the needed stress to the right of personal security. I, therefore, request you to accept it and vote for Lady Rama Rau's amendment.

Miss Sushila Pandit next spoke in Hindustani supporting the resolution. She was cheered when she emphasised that they wanted National Freedom first.

Shrimati Subhadramma (Bezwada) supporting the resolution in a general way said in Telugu as follows:—

I am overpowered with joy when I see a resolution like this in a Women's Conference which generally deals in social and economic subjects. It is a very important resolution and except in Congress meetings and conferences under Congress auspices held in Andhradesa, in no other conferences and not even in the Andhra conferences such a resolution was allowed. I consider that this resolution is now introduced here for the first time in the Women's Conference chiefly because of the inspiration we are receiving from Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru and our President Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. This resolution touches the fundamental rights of all people, men and women alike. At the present time this demand of fundamental rights is much more needed when we see so many patriotic workers of our country are jailed or detained and made to suffer when they agitate for the freedom of nation and the country. Individual liberty is set at naught by the Government and the freedom of speech and the Press is all restricted. I don't want to take more time, but I would ask you all to support this resolution heartily.

Miss Gladys Owen (U. P. Oudh) came up next and said: Friends, I noticed that you gave Lady Rama Rau a very good hearing. She put before you what might seem to be an excellent compromise but it is a compromise to which I could not agree. In her speech Lady Rama Rau, by way of illustration, suggests that the head, arms, legs and all the organs of the human body have the same value. I doubt it. I have seen men who had heads but no feet but they were living, but I have never seen anyone with feet and no head and yet had life. I would ask you which is the more important, the head or the foot? Obviously, the head. I would ask you which is the most important part of this Resolution? Is it not that clause which pertains to personal security? Then we must insert again into that same clause those three small words "and above all."

It has been said during the discussions that you are framing a resolution which will be read a thousand years from now. If that should be so, then, please do not pass a resolution which suggests that the members of the All-India Women's Conference, meeting in Coconada, in 1941, put the same value on property and street demonstrations as on personal security. It would not represent our appreciation of above property. The right to property is questioned by many today. However, that has nothing to do with the resolution which is before us.

It has been argued that on grammatical grounds the words "and above all" should be deleted. Correct grammar is important but not so important as truth and justice and the rights of the human race. However, don't be too concerned about your English grammar. Remember you are framing your Resolution in a foreign language. Even those whose mother-tongue is English frequently make grammatical errors in speaking and in writing their illogical language. I would therefore ask you not to delete the words "and above all" in order to show that the members of the All-India Women's Conference expressed themselves in perfect English.

I have noticed that in speaking on the subject of Civil Liberties we are inclined to let our emotions become somewhat dominant. There is danger in this as it leads to emotional thinking and retards the intellect in its process of reasoning. Let us think with our minds, not with our emotions! It is, I think, on emotional grounds that some delegates regret that the word "detenus" has not been inserted in the Resolution. That word is not necessary as the Resolution covers detenus, not in India only, but in every country. In the Resolution on Civil Liberties we are associating ourselves with men and women the world over, who desire to see that the rights of every human being are preserved.

I am glad Mrs. Hannah Sen has proposed that the words "and above all" in the latter part of the Resolution should be re-inserted. I support this proposal and hope that you will pass it with an overwhelming majority.

Coming back to the myke Miss Gladys Owen supplemented the above speech with the following words:—

"Just one point more. I would suggest that the word "fundamental" preceding "rights" be deleted. By doing so you would avoid the question on the correctness of the grammar."

Miss Swarjya Lakshmi (Cocanada) next supported the amendment of Miss Wagle in Telugu,

Miss Vilasini Devi Shenai (Madras) in supporting the second amendment (of Lady Rama Rau) said: I am here to support the amendment suggested by Lady Rama Rau. I know in these days it is fashionable for some on policy to burst out into emotional phrases in a patriotic manner. It may be that people may claim culture more than I do. But I would not allow reason to be sacrificed to sentiment. It is that reason that suggests me that Lady Rama Rau's amendment should be preferred. As has been said already, times are changing, and, it is not possible to stress or give prominence to, one particular question enjoying our attention this year and another next year according as the wheel of fortune changes. It is, therefore, we want to lay down a Charter which will go down to history, and, in such general terms as is now found in this resolution, the Charter is drafted to refer to all time in general. Is it a big Charter having all our rights? After all, in this resolution we have made special mention of a few rights. We have mentioned important ones in this resolution, and therefore, no precedence of one to the other is necessary. I heartily wish that Lady Rama Rau's amendment is accepted.

Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru rising next on the dais, supported the first amendment. In doing so, she said:

Before I speak on the main theme I want to say a word in protest of all that has been said for retaining the main wording of the proposition on the ground of correct grammar and niceties of the English language. I think it is wrong to lay so much emphasis on that. After all English is a foreign language to all of us and even if we are obliged to adopt it as a medium for the discharge of our work, we may not involve ourselves in its niceties to such an extent as to preserve them at the cost of our main purpose. Not only the English language but no language is worth that. It is after all a means of expressing our feelings and ideas. And as long as it discharges that function, it fulfils its object. I am not a master of the English language and I am not ashamed for not being so. As long as I speak in the language of my heart I know I speak a language which touches the hearts of others; and for me it is sufficient. That part of the argument in support of the main resolution therefore does not influence me. I speak for the amendment moved by Miss Wagle. As has been pointed out by other speakers all rights though precious, do not weigh equal in the scale of values. I do think that our Right of Freedom is far above other fundamental Rights as enumerated in the list. The Right of congregation, freedom of the press and others are inherent in that right of freedom as has already been pointed out to you. I also want to make it clear that the right of



Members of the Standing Committee of the A.-I. W. C. for 1941.

personal security is not being given the chief place by the proposer of the amendment because of the special conditions of subjection prevailing in our country. In all conditions and at all times it draws the first attention and most justifiably so. I will not talk about the deplorable conditions prevailing in the country which make it all the more necessary that the amendment be adopted. I want you to think carefully and to vote in favour of Miss Wagle's amendment. I think it is necessary that the women assembled here do show to the world that they consider the Right of Security of person more valuable than other rights.

Shrimati Kamaladevi in further supporting the first amendment said: I wish to support the amendment placed before the House by Miss Wagle. I want to say a few words, because a little while ago a speaker referred to a serious thing in a flippant manner. She said that patriotism had become a fashion, that our emotions were allowed to run away with us especially from platform to show that one is patriotic. I remind you that patriotism is a thing of one's own inner feeling for one's country: a feeling of urge to serve one's own country. It is a very serious thing. Hundreds of our countrymen have given their lives for it, thousands are still behind the prison bars, and paid the highest price. It is preposterous to say all this patriotism is nothing but a show! We know thousands and thousands have sacrificed for the freedom of their country because of their patriotism. I don't call it patriotism when people stand on platforms and make speeches; standing on platforms is no patriotism. But to speak of patriotism itself in such a light vein I think is a serious matter.

I now come back to the Resolution. It has been said that we are creating a Charter of liberty for the future generations. This is not true. The Charter has been laid out by others before us. It has been evolved through centuries and generations. All that we are doing is only repeating what they have already said. Our generation has already been given this Charter of rights and we are not giving any new Charter. The Charter is there in the minds of thousands of people all over the world. We are not merely talking in the air, or indulging in high-sounding phrases simply as echoes, but because a situation has arisen in the country and in the world bringing these rights to the forefront. It is not possible to merely generalise. We have to put some emphasis where we ought to: emphasis is laid on that part of the Resolution "g" by preceding it with three words We know in so many countries that emphasis has become very necessary just now. I don't want to go into all that the previous speakers have said. It is one thing putting generally all the rights one after another and another

putting emphasis upon a particular right. We are discussing these here to-day because of the one particular right above all others – personal security which is indispensable for everyone. We are not doing this out of any idealism because it is a noble Charter, but because it is of immediate importance. That is why this resolution with the amendment of emphasis has come. We are meeting at a time when we have to give expression to that particular emphasis because of the present situation. Miss Wagle has already told you why that emphasis has been made. I hope that you understand that we cannot be content generalising, but we have to particularise. I hope that it will be realised that to-day we pass this resolution because we need to keep all these rights before our minds to state them to the people and also because personal liberty is of utmost importance at the moment when so many in our country have become victims because it has been ignored.

The President. I think you have heard every side of the question. I don't think there is need for debate. I now request delegates to vote on the last amendment moved by Lady Rama Rau.

Votes having been counted, the President declared the amendment lost by 21 votes.

Next the President took the voting on the first amendment of Miss Wagle and after the counting was over, she declared Miss Wagle's amendment carried by a majority of 21 votes.

Finally the original resolution thus amended, was put to vote, and was carried.

The President: Mrs. Cousins will now place a resolution before the House.

Mrs. M. E. Cousins rising, said: I have a very simple resolution to place before you and I think that every one will join in supporting it:

"This Conference congratulates the Mysore Government on appointing a woman Doctor as Chief Medical Officer of all the Women's Hospitals in the State on terms of equal status with the Senior Surgeon of all men's Hospitals in the State."

We are very happy that she has been admitted on terms of absolute equal status with the Senior Surgeon in the State. Of course, in Travancore there has been a woman Surgeon General; she has just retired from service on account of age limit. I have much pleasure in moving this resolution.

Dr. Ratnamma Isaac (Mysore), following the mover of the Resolution, said: I have a great pleasure in seconding the Resolution so ably moved by Mrs. Cousins. Some of you who came to Mysore last year for the Conference would have seen the enthusiastic way in which the Maternity and Child Welfare Work is carried on in the several centres in Mysore City and Bangalore. Now, in addition to the major institutions as (1) Maternity Hospitals, and (2) Maternity Wards attached to Dispensaries in the District Head-quarters, in many villages maternity homes are springing up. Till now the whole Medical Department was under the management of the Senior Surgeon. You know very well how men would be able to do Maternity Work. The Government of Mysore in order to make this work very effective, have now appointed a Senior Lady Medical Officer as the Chief Medical Officer in charge of all the Maternity Hospitals and Homes in the same grade as the Senior Surgeon, to supervise and to be in touch with the Maternity Work in all parts of the State, and I am sure this forward move by Mysore will be greatly appreciated by the Conference and you will all join with us in congratulating His Highness' Government for this appointment.

The resolution was put to vote and carried unanimously.

The President: There is another Resolution which is moved from the Chair:—

“This Conference sends its greetings and congratulations to the S. N. D. T. Indian Women's University on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee and expresses its deep appreciation of the contribution made by this University to the education of women. It authorises the Honorary General Secretary to forward a copy of the above resolution to the Chancellor of the University.”

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Before adjourning, at about noon, the President declared that the Group Meetings would begin at 1 P. M., and that if these meetings were finished that day, the next Plenary Session of the Conference would be held next morning.

She then asked those delegates who had not obtained copies of the proposed changes in the A. I. W. C. Constitution to kindly see the Hon. General Secretary and take their copies. She also intimated the House that Mrs. Kulsum Sayani of Bombay would speak after dinner on her experience in her work on adult literacy among Muslim women in Bombay.

The President was also glad to announce that she had received a telegraphic message from Mrs. Corbett Ashby of England, to the effect that she would give a broadcast message to the All-India Women's Conference at 8 o'clock I. S. T. that evening from London. She requested the delegates to be present in the Conference Hall to receive the message on the Radio.

British Women's Message to the All-India Women's Conference.

The President, Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and the delegates were present at 8 P. M. at the Conference Hall when Mrs. Corbett Ashby, President, International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, broadcast from London a message of good wishes to the All-India Women's Conference, then meeting at Cocanada, as follows:—

"Our first energy must go to fighting the evil forces of Nazism and Fascism, but we must also keep alive our social work and see that war emergency social services become a solid foundation of better health and happiness in the future. We appreciate how critical are the times in which you are meeting—critical within and critical without. Asia and Europe are linked in common suffering. We do long to link up our efforts with yours to plan and build a new world from this strife to which you and we must equally contribute."

Mrs. Ashby was speaking for the Liaison Group of British Women's Societies co-operating with the All-India Women's Conference, the Women's Advisory Council on Indian Affairs and eighteen representative women's organisations in England.

THIRD AND FINAL SITTING—1st January 1942.

9-30 A. M. to 1-30 P. M.

The Third and Final sitting of the Plenary Session of the All-India Women's Conference was held in the quadrangle Hall of the P. R. College, Cocanada, on Thursday the 1st January 1942, with Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit in the Chair. The proceedings commenced at 9-30 A. M.

The President at the outset regretted that the proceedings could not be started at the appointed time. She observed that although in the previous evening it had been declared that the session would begin much earlier, there had been some misunderstanding due to there being a different item in the printed programme for that morning. But I wish to make a sugges-

tion for future years, at least, that the programme should not be printed some days before the session as is being done. From day to day the actual programme should be announced so that punctuality may be observed and the timings could be changed to the convenience of members."

The following resolution was then moved from **The Chair** :

"In view of the fact that congestion and cancellation of concessions, due to war conditions, have made travel by rail most difficult, the Conference appeals to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and the Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University, to create a centre this year, either at Bezwada or Rajahmundry, where men and women students of this Province may sit for their admission examination."

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Four Groups had discussed the following subjects, separately, on the 30th and 31st December 1941, and their reports were now ready for presenting to the General Body :—

<i>Group.</i>	<i>Chairman.</i>	<i>Secretaries.</i>
I. Education	Mrs. Hannah Sen	{ Miss Leilamani Naidu { Miss Sushila Pandit
II. Social	Mrs. J. R. Doctor	{ Mrs. Kitty Shiva Rao { Mrs. Jayashri Raiji
III. Economic & Health	Shrimati Kamaladevi	{ Mrs. Renuka Ray { Mrs. Rajan Nehru
IV. Rural Reconstruction	Lady Rama Rau	{ Mrs. Kamalamma Dasappa { Miss Kamal Wagle

The President called upon Mrs. Doctor to present the Report of the Findings of Group II.

Mrs. J. R. Doctor (Bombay) read the following Report of Group-II Social-containing the findings of the Group Members and the Resolutions:—

Group II—Social.

The Group dealing with social questions devoted its time to two main problems, namely, Hindu Law Reform and Untouchability.

With reference to the question of reform of Hindu Law the main recommendations of the Hindu Law Committee were considered and the following resolutions were drafted to be placed before the Plenary Session.

The Resolutions read as follows :—

- I. "This Conference fully endorses the main recommendations of the Hindu Law Committee, namely, that the whole of Hindu Law be codified, and demand that the codification be based on the principle of equal rights and liabilities for both men and women."

There was a long discussion on the question of equal rights and liabilities for both sons and daughters. There were three trends of opinion expressed :—

- i) that there should be equal shares for sons and daughters;
- ii) that the daughter should be given a lesser share than the son;
- iii) that as between a married and an unmarried daughter the latter should get a larger share.

It was, however, finally pointed out and agreed upon that in accordance with the principle of equal rights and liabilities for men and women the principle of equal shares for sons and daughters should be adopted and no distinction should be made between a married and an unmarried daughter when allotting shares.

With regard to the application of the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act of 1938 to Agricultural Property, the following resolution was unanimously passed :—

- II. "This Conference urges the Governors' Provinces to enact parallel legislation with reference to agricultural lands and having retrospective effect in order to give Hindu widows the full measure of benefit undoubtedly contemplated by the framers of the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act—Act XVIII of 1937 as amended by Act XI of 1938."

The topic of the reform of the Hindu Marriage Laws was then taken up. The following resolution was drafted :—

- III. "This Conference reiterates its former demand that any contemplated legislation on the topic of marriage should embody legislation on the questions of monogamy, separate residence and maintenance and dissolution of marriage on certain specified grounds."

The general consensus of opinion was that monogamy was absolutely essential together with the right of separate residence and maintenance.

On the question of dissolution of marriage there was difference of opinion as to the advisability of advocating such a measure. While some members felt that the principle of monogamy could not be workable in practice unless the right of divorce was simultaneously recognised, others felt that dissolution of marriage was neither essential nor advisable. Members, therefore, made the request that this point be opened to discussion at the Plenary Session.

- IV. It was suggested that by enlisting the sympathy and services of lawyers, every Branch of the A. I. W. C. should try to start a free legal information Bureau to advise poor and ignorant women who are defrauded of their legal rights.

The following resolution was then passed unanimously:

- V. "This Conference notes with regret that its previous demand that at least two women should be included on the panel of the Hindu Law Committee has not been given effect to, and once more repeats its demand."

- VI. The problem of untouchability was taken up next. It was resolved to request all the Branches of the A. I. W. C. to take up investigation of the living and service of those employed and belonging to the Harijan class especially those employed as sweepers in their respective areas and recommend improvements in their conditions. The following points may be enquired into:—

- i) Harijan population;
- ii) Occupations and Wages;
- iii) Facilities for carrying out their work in a clean and healthy way.
- iv) Are they properly housed ?
- v) Do they receive the same facilities for education as other citizens ?
- vi) Do they receive the same facilities for medical relief ?
- vii) What are the particular disabilities they suffer from ?

The Report was dealt with in the Conference subject by subject.

Mrs. Doctor moved the 1st Resolution in the said Report, which referred to the Codification of Hindu Law.

Miss Mustaffa Khan (Maharashtra) spoke in Hindustani seconding the Resolution.

Mrs. B. Kameswaramma explained the Resolution and the opinions of the Group Members in Telugu.

Shrimati U. Lakshmi Kantamma (Rajahmundry) supported the Resolution in Telugu, and, in doing so, she said: This Resolution is important for the fact that it affects our rights and liabilities. In ancient times there was not the present regrettable situation. It is only in the recent times of this Yuga that our rights which were conferred by our Vedas and Shastras were jeopardized and curtailed or even removed altogether in certain cases. "Amajorira Pithrasacha" of the Rig-Veda is an authority which entitles the daughter to have a share of the father's property. **Manu Smriti**, the greatest authority for the Hindus, from which even the present Hindu Law is traced, clearly lays down the share of the property and the rights to the property that the unmarried daughter should have when the father dies. At the time of his death the father must lay aside some property for his unmarried daughters, or brothers should give some share of their properties to the unmarried sisters according to **Manu-Smriti**. In the matter of "Dravya Parigraheshu Chaivam" and "Jayapatyornvibhago Drisyate" our ancestors gave adequate rights to husband and wife to have equal rights in their properties. Also widows of yore had right and control on their husbands' properties. Time within which I should speak here would not suffice if I give you the authorities and quotations which substantiate my argument that the women have had equal rights. I can quote further authorities from the Rig-Veda to show that Women should be given good treatment in the share of the property and the parent should discharge his liability to the daughter. There are frivolous complaints that women would waste away the property or money, if given them, that they should be kept under check and control, that they do not care for the family if they hold property, and so on. These and other charges against women are baseless if you take illustrations of the historical women of yore like Sita, Damayanti, Savitri, and of the women of the present day even, who hold control over property and who manage affairs. Do not the present day women emulate the lives of Sita, Damayanti and other ideal chaste women of yore? Do all women live bad and unchaste life and waste money and property and become prodigals? Are there not men, bad, lustful, sinful and unfit for good society who waste away their property and squander their money? So, there are good and bad people amongst men and women; one sex need not complain against another and the man needs no domination and authority over the woman. Because there are some bad women in society, do you refuse to give woman proper rights on that ground? It is absurd

to argue like that. Notwithstanding all opposition against our rights, I appeal to all women to fight for their rights till they obtain them.

The President put the resolution to vote and declared it carried.

Mrs. Doctor then moved the second resolution urging the Governors, Provinces to enact legislation with reference to agricultural lands.

Shrimati Sarala Devi, M. L. A., Orissa, seconded the resolution.

After the resolution had been translated in Telugu and explained **Shrimati Ch. Chandramathi** (Rajahmundry) supported the Resolution in Telugu stating that Government should be urged for the welfare and safety of the Hindu widows who were suffering a lot on account of this unfortunate position.

Shrimati B. Kameswaramma further supporting the resolution in Telugu, said: In our discussion we must bear in mind that all of us are slaves in this "Bharata Desha", and women are slaves of slaves. You can imagine the position of Hindu widows. Their condition is most pitiable. "Dhanam Mulam Idam Jagath" is an oft-repeated saying. Without money how is one to get on in life? The widow not only loses a loving husband but also her position in social life; she is also affected economically. She has to depend for her maintenance upon the good grace of some male relatives, though when her husband was alive she was the queen of the house. After a great deal of agitation, legislation was passed giving a widow a share in her husband's property to a certain extent. But she has even now no right over the immovable property and the agricultural lands. This resolution seeks to restore to her the right over the immovable property as well. I request every delegate to support this resolution and urge upon the Provincial Governments to take immediate steps to adopt such legislation as would rectify the defect in the Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act in order that the widow may get her due share in the immovable property and agricultural land.

The resolution was then put to vote and declared carried.

In moving the third resolution on the topic of marriage and on the questions of monogamy, maintenance, dissolution, etc., **Mrs. J. R. Doctor** said:

"Divorce is repugnant to every woman but it is essential in certain circumstances. The most essential legislation at present is the enforcement

of strict monogamy, but monogamy could not be enforced without corresponding laws on divorce. For instance, when one of the party contracts a disease like leprosy, the other party should have the right of divorce if he or she wishes. Married couples could not be bound down for ever when circumstances like virulent diseases or some such cases occur. Also, Hindu Law allows a man to marry in the life time of his first wife, who has no redress. If bigamy were one of the causes allowed for divorce, the woman could, if she wishes, get divorce and may marry again. Thus, you will see that the enactment of legislation on divorce is as important as enactment of legislation on monogamy.

"I do not think there will be further discussion on the first portion of the resolution. The remaining part of the resolution with reference to separate residence, maintenance and dissolution of marriage may be thrown open for discussion."

Miss Vilasini Devi Shenai (Advocate, Madras) next spoke on the question of dissolution of marriage as follows:—

Divorce forms an integral part of both Christian and Muslim systems of Jurisprudence. In Hindu Law the position is indeed very paradoxical. We have a male Divorce Law. In the Manusmriti a right to marry a second time is no doubt given to the male, but only under certain very restricted conditions. The British Judges of 18th Century got the impression that all oriental nations were polygamous judging by the example of a few Rajas with whom they came into contact, and sanctioned Polygamy outright with that disastrous consequences. To day there are many examples of the Hindu men casting off their wives for very flimsy reasons.

What about this silent tragedy which is being enacted in several Hindu households – this tyranny of a Hindu husband, who for no plausible reason turns out his legally wedded wife? It is possible neither for you to imagine nor for me to adequately describe the tragic condition of these discarded wives. Most of them being uneducated are only fit to be domestic drudges. Some of these women remain with their relatives where, they are treated worse than menial servants. Some try to seek work with other families, who very rarely care to engage them, as they suspect that their fate might have been due to their own misbehaviour. An educated woman might succeed in securing employment in some institution. Thus many an innocent wife being thrust beyond the pale of respectability is obliged to work out miserable existence in solitude, until finally Death puts an end to her struggle.

Christianity insists on monogamy. Islam sanctions 4 wives for a man at one and the same time. Hinduism is still more liberal. It allows a man to change his wives as he changes his shirts sometimes even more frequently! What is worse, since canons of Hinduism do not penalise concubinage and even wink at it, we often come across cases where a man maintains a concubine along with a legally wedded wife. Under such circumstances the humiliation suffered by the poor wife, surpasses one's comprehension and yet she dare not open her mouth for fear of being subjected to cruel treatment or being summarily turned out of the house altogether by her Lord and Master!

Was it not Jeemutavahana, the great Bengal Commentator who said "A 1000 texts cannot alter a single fact." Can it be said that there is no Divorce in Hindu society in fact? If a husband can repudiate his wife and marry a second wife at his pleasure and the 1st wife never lives with him for decades together, what useful purpose is served by proclaiming from the housetops that Hindu Law does not contemplate Divorce, that under Hindu Law marriage is a sacrament and therefore they can never be separated? It requires two persons to contract a valid marriage and it follows that if it is binding on the wife as a sacrament, surely it is binding on the husband as well. If conjugal life be dead for years together and the husband and wife never contemplate even in their remotest imagination the possibility of living together, what is it they gain what is it that society gains, what is it that Hindu Law gains, by not countenancing the Divorce that exists in fact? Such an atrocity is unheard of in any system of Law and it is strange how we have been able to tolerate it even for a single day—the husband marries a second wife and enjoys life. The wife is worse than a widow. Fortunately at last Pandit Iswarchandra Vidyasagar's Legislation has legalised widow remarriage, but these Quasi-widows, are still without a legal remedy.

Under the Native Converts' Marriage Dissolution Act, judges may dissolve a marriage contracted under Hindu Law and pronounce freedom to both the parties to marry again when one of the parties becomes a convert to Christianity. Again Mohammedan Law declares that conversion to Islam *ipso facto* dissolves a marriage contracted prior thereto if the convert calls upon the other party to join the faith and the latter refuses. The upshot of all this is, the present provisions of Hindu Law—unconsciously open door of apostasy to those deserted wives who wish to remarry if they embrace Christianity or Islam. But so long as they choose to remain devout Hindus—Remarriage is taboo! Ancient Law gives

like Narada and Parasara did recognise remarriage of women under certain circumstances, if they were so inclined. However, Hindu sages recommend deserted wives and widows to lead a life of austerity and disapprove of re-marriage. What was originally a mere recommendation has now become established as a legal injunction. Arguments advanced against remarriage of women are (i) Physically and morally it is possible for women to lead the life of a celibate. (2) Number of women exceeds men. (3) No old maids in Hindu Society as in Western because Hinduism is based on Justice and Equity and it sees to it that every woman gets at least one husband! Polygamy has been defended on the ground that the number of women exceeds the number of men and hence many women prefer a $\frac{1}{2}$ or a $\frac{1}{4}$ husband—to none at all. I know of communities where the number of men is in excess of the number of women and yet instead of resorting to Polyandry and satisfying themselves with a half or $\frac{1}{4}$ wife these men intermarry with other communities. Horrible atrocities are being perpetrated in the name of Dharma Shastra and Kulachara—God did not create men or women to remain celibates except when they had a definite reason for so doing. By marriage women signify their willingness to fulfil the duties of wifehood and motherhood and when the husband deserts her and deprives her of her legitimate rights and happiness, what do you want her to do? and yet the society will lift its hands in horror and pour forth its wrath on such unfortunate woman who goes astray. Driven as she is to desperation, I challenge you to condemn her conduct as outrageous—society will not recognise her as a wife—and Law will not classify her as a widow—she is an amphibious creature. If man cannot remain a celibate neither can a woman. It is really putting a premium upon unchastity. Then you open the door for illegitimate unions, perhaps some resort to sterilisation which ultimately falls upon the health of the parties concerned. If offspring do follow they are clearly unwanted and we find criminal prosecutions for infanticide. Should some children be tolerated to live their fate is far from enviable. Let them turn out to be ever so talented ever so virtuous citizens, the hall mark of bastardy is branded on their faces and nothing can wash off the paint. The sins of the parents are thus visited on these innocent creatures. These unfortunate women are also flesh and blood and not images of stone and behind and beneath that expression-less face remember there lies a soul reverberating with hopes unfulfilled a heart throbbing with desires unsatisfied and a body and every fibre of which writhes in silent agony. My blood boils to see my relatives, my friends, my country women suffering like martyrs because of some pernicious customs which have imperceptibly crept into our shastras and which have been welcomed and are still being

perpetuated for purely selfish motives by persons who I am sorry to say have only a block of granite in place of that anatomical organ called a heart. Shakespeare said, "Frailty, thy name is woman" Let me institute an appropriate parallel "Selfishness, thy name is man." People seem to be obsessed with the fear that the day after the divorce Bill comes into an operating Law all the Hindu married ladies will straightway rush to Court to get their marital ties severed. Has the Divorce privilege been abused in the Christian and Muslim communities? Are you suggesting that the Hindu woman is gifted with a lesser degree of self reliance, morality and discretion than her Christian or Muslim sisters, since the identical privilege they are and have been enjoying with advantage for generations together and which it would appear even the Hindu woman had been enjoying in ancient days, if imported into our jurisprudence will lead to its abuse, and therefore you dare not accept it? Even assuming it is going to be misused by a person here and there, why not follow the maxim observed in Criminal law, namely it is better policy to let "10 guilty persons escape the gallows rather than let one innocent person suffer." We have been taught to believe that "Man is born to dictate and enjoy, woman to obey and suffer." Let that ideal stand for it serves all the more to glorify the Hindu woman. But let us not exploit it. In order to safeguard the morals and happiness of those unfortunate women who are not able to live up to that high ideal rather than that they should go astray I would see them benefit by the Divorce Act. Goal of life is a virtuous life. Paradoxical as it might sound I want the Divorce Act in order to prevent Divorces. Today a man runs riot because he is confident Law will not aid the woman—"Spare the Law and spoil the husband". Once he comes to realise woman has got a handle against him, he will think twice before he misbehaves. Therein lies the value of Divorce proviso. Tell me you desire a steady decrease in Hindu population. Tell me you intend abetting the physical and mental deterioration of Hindu women. Tell me you wish to put a premium upon apotasy. Tell me you are determined to encourage the moral degeneration of our Hindu women and then but mind you not till then tell me Hindu women do not require and should not be conceded the right of divorce. Today our men are clamouring for political rights at the hands of an alien government. Have they conceded their wives their own sisters, their own daughters "flesh of their flesh" blood of their blood "social equality and economic justice. ? In the name of Indian womanhood, in the name of our suffering sisters, in the name of generations yet unborn, in the name of all that you hold sacred and dear, I commend this resolution to you and hope you will pass it "Nemcon"—Thank you.

Mrs. B. Kameswarma next supported the resolution in Telugu and said:

This resolution is no new thing in this Conference. The demands made previously in this Conference are being made again. In the Legislative Assembly there were Bills to legislate on marriage, but legislation is yet to take place. Therefore, we remind the Government again of our demands. We are asking for Legislation on important questions like monogamy, separate residence and maintenance for the woman and also dissolution of marriage on special grounds.

The important point upon which there is much controversy in the country is about the dissolution of marriage. Even in the Group meeting there was some difference of opinion. We want dissolution of marriage under certain conditions which make life of the married couple intolerable or miserable. No woman would like to get away from the home she has created. By nature she cannot get away leaving the loving husband or the children born to her. On the other hand she will strive to harmonise any disturbances arising now and then in the run of the family. Only in extraordinary circumstances can this regrettable remedy of divorce be sought. Such a legislation will give a right to a woman to dissolve the marriage, if necessary, and remarry if she chooses. The Government are requested to embody this in their legislation. I, therefore, request you to pass this resolution.

Mrs. Umabai supported the resolution speaking in Hindusthani.

Mrs. J. R. Doctor said: Some of you are thinking that divorce would come automatically. It is not so. It relates to both man and woman. I want to remove this misunderstanding.

Part by part the resolution was put to vote and carried. The whole resolution was then put to the House and was declared carried with one dissentient vote."

Mrs. Doctor proceeded with the 4th, 5th and 6th resolutions in the Report and each was declared carried.

The President then put the whole Group Findings (II) to the vote, and declared it carried.

The President : The findings of the Rural Re-construction Group (IV) will be placed before you by Mrs. Kamalamma Dasappa.

The following report was submitted by Mrs. Dasappa :—

Group IV—Rural Reconstruction.

Lady Rama Rau, the Chairwoman, explained to the audience the new Village Project, the A. I. W. C. had now undertaken (The Interim Report of the A. I. W. C. Special Committee for investigating the Project for Creating a Model village). The Scheme was fully supported.

Mrs. Kamalamma Dasappa said : Lady Rama Rau was the Chairman of this Village Reconstruction Group but as she is not here today, I present that Report. We did not do much, because there were very few in the Group. But Lady Rama Rau gave a full account of the Rural Reconstruction Project fully discussed by a Committee and a report was framed. I do not think it should be repeated now. This is a five-year scheme. Some ask "Why do you select one village?" One is enough for the present. If our scheme proves a success in one village, it can be extended to other villages. I am glad we were fortunate to secure the services of Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai to take up this work in Gujarat as an experimental measure. The Law of Heredity to property will secure you money, and so whatever money you get from it may be given to this Fund. We will construct a model village and with your co-operation and sympathy, we hope to have the fifth Conference from this, in our "Village Beautiful" I hope you will all help in our colossal undertaking and make the work a great success.

The Report was adopted unanimously.

The President requested Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru to take the Chair in her absence.

The Acting President called upon Shrimati Kamaladevi to place the Report of Group III A—Economic Section before the House.

Shrimati Kamaladevi, placed the following Report of the Economic Group in the Conference :

Group III - Economic and Health.

A. Economic Section.

The Economic Group discussed the following points :—

- I. The Economic Independence of Women;
- II. Some aspects of the Unemployment Problem;

and after due consideration their findings were embodied in the following Resolutions and recommendations :—

"This Conference recognises the right of women to economic independence and considers that all services and professions be opened to them. It is regrettable that women are still excluded from various recognised services and professions and are debarred from training facilities. In this connection we should strive for the securing of

- (a) equal pay for equal work;
- (b) equal privileges in all other respects;
- (c) no discrimination against married women;
- (d) facilities for training in all services and professions;
- (e) suitable legislation for the protection of workers in unregulated industries and domestic services;
- (f) provision for maternity leave and maternity benefits;
- (g) provision of creches and nursery schools for the children of workers".

Recommendations :

1. Maternity Benefit Act.

As the Maternity Benefit Act has not always worked to the advantage of working women and has often resulted in their being discharged from employment, we recommend that

(a) the Branches of the A. I. W. C. should study the causes which make the working of this Act detrimental with a view to ratifying them;

(b) they should co-operate with other organisations for the enforcement of Maternity Benefit Acts.

2. Facilities for women in Services and Professions.

(a) As women are not taking due advantage of the existing avenues of employment, contacts be created by the Branches of the A. I. W. C. with local educational institutions so as to collect data with regard to the number of students desirous of joining professions and services. This information should be utilised to help students with suggestions to entering existing and new avenues of work. With regard this, it was suggested that specialisation in professions, such as

- (i) Journalism;
- (ii) Accountancy and Secretarial work;
- (iii) Architecture and Interior Decoration;

(iv) Training in particular lines of teaching, such as, Braille, Teaching of the mentally deficient, and deaf and dumb could be taken up with great advantage.

(b) Pamphlets should be issued from the A. I. W. C. giving details of existing facilities in different professions so that women be induced to enter these professions.

3. Pressure should be brought on local bodies, educational and industrial institutions by personal representatives and through the medium of the Press and platform in favour of the recommendations embodied in the above resolution.

2. Unemployment.

Resolution.

"In view of the present economic dislocation this Conference recommends that a comprehensive Scheme be initiated by the Government including:—

- (a) the formation of industrial co-operatives ;
- (b) Vocational Training and Vocational projects."

Recommendations.

We feel the establishment of vocational projects and institutions will also help the beggar problem which is assuming an increasingly serious aspect. With regard to the Beggar Problem we consider that adequate legislation should be enforced to stop beggary and at the same time establish a sufficient number of homes for the infirm and the disabled.

In presenting the Report, **Shrimati Kamaladevi** said : Ladies, I wish to express my thanks to those who worked on the Committee, and Mrs. Renuka Ray and Mrs. Rajan Nehru, for acting as secretaries.

While reading the Report **Shrimati Kamaladevi** made certain remarks and observations explaining the position with reference to the Report. She said, "We would like the Branches to definitely concentrate on first finding out what are the existing possibilities and then take them up. We have made these recommendations. We should have propaganda for public opinion. We should also try and approach the authorities of all industrial and educational institutions. We have only taken the question of maternity benefits. But we are of opinion that suitable legislation for workers in services, in domestic service, should also be introduced. This question of

women's employment is being brought to the attention of local bodies. We cannot directly take up the question. There are separate workers' organisations which are strong enough to solve this question. It is difficult and not desirable for the Women's Conference to form Labour Unions. But it would be possible for us to find out how the Maternity Benefits Act is working and see that it is properly enforced".

"I have gone into statistics. I have seen that there is a fall in the women employees and that there was a lot of trouble. We shall have to see that these women are saved from these hardships. The Conference should co-operate with other bodies in bringing relief from these hardships for the women".

She was asked a question like this: "Can you give me any statistics where the Maternity Benefits Act is working?"

Shrimati Kamaladevi: "Certainly, we have got statistics. We could give you more detailed information as well as list of the professions and services where women bear hardships".

Questioned as to unemployment, she said, "Of course, it is so important. The whole question of dealing with unemployment cannot be taken up by this Conference. No private body can take it up."

Placing the resolution on Vocational Training before the House, **Shrimati Kamaladevi** said: "This is one of the effective ways of tackling at least the enormous problem in the rural areas. Generally half or more of the population would be landless. We know that labour, specially in villages, is only seasonal, and, therefore, those people have to live in a very precarious condition. I am particularly in favour of introducing these industries in the villages to give the workers some work. It would be better if we can have a big co-operative scheme, both for production and marketing."

Next, **Shrimati Kamaladevi** proceeded to the Beggar Problem. She read the portion from the report. She said; "This question of beggary is really a big problem in itself. I personally feel that any Branch which takes it up should make it the work for the year. I do not think it possible for a branch to take up many things at the same time. I may say that where there is co-operation of Municipalities and Boards a Branch might work it out. It is something that needs very concentrated attention. The Report is now before you for discussion."

Mrs. B. Kameswaramma gave the substance of the report in Telugu. During her speech Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit re-occupied the Presidential Chair.

The President then called upon Mrs. Rajan Nehru who spoke in Hindustani on all the points.

Mrs. Renuka Ray then placed the first part of the findings under "Economic Section", namely, "The Economic Independence of Women" before the House.

She said: "Shrimati Kamaladevi has already explained the Findings of the Economic Group to you. In placing the first resolution before you, I only want to stress one or two points. We know that there is growing discontent with the working of the Maternity Benefits Acts where these exist. It has resulted in great discrimination against women and employers find it so much easier to discharge them than give maternity benefits. There is one system of maternity benefits, namely, the Cuban System which should be introduced in India, as it helps to do away with this discrimination and yet provides for a regular system of maternity benefits. According to this system, the employer, the employee and the State or Government, all contribute towards a maternity benefits fund, the benefits are given from this fund when the women workers need it. All employers have to contribute and so it is of no advantage to an employer to discharge women employees when they are in need of maternity benefits as he has to pay towards the fund in any case. I remember that we discussed this Cuban system of maternity benefits in the Conference some years back. Now I think it is time that we took up the matter and make efforts to try and change the Acts in the Provinces and secure the passage of an All-India Maternity Benefits Act on these lines. I should like to ask the delegates to approach the Provincial legislatures in order to effect this change. It is not possible for us to take up simultaneously all labour problems and deal with them effectively, but we do feel that it is imperative that we do something soon in regard to this matter.

"This second part of the resolution dealing with" facilities for women in services and professions" speaks for itself. I do hope that our Branches will try to be active in this respect—and create contacts as suggested with women desiring to enter professions and help and advise them in regard to new lines of work. If each delegate will concern herself with even collecting information in this respect in their own local areas, we should have valuable data in a year's time which will enable us to help women

to enter new professions and careers. There is a growing demand for the services of women and the facilities for adequate training are most necessary.”

The House accepted the proposal.

Mrs. Rajan Nehru proposed the second part of the Economic Report dealing with some aspects of the Unemployment Problem.

She said: “I need not stress on the point that in these times when important products do not reach India due to war conditions facilities should be given by the Government to indigenous manufacturing. This does not mean only textiles and cloth manufactures, but there are hundreds of other things besides textile goods. It is essential that the Government should initiate a comprehensive scheme, on a commercial basis to support these industries. If such industries, are run on small co-operative lines helped by the Govt. in production and marketing, the work would be easy; we would like that our Branches take up this work. An industry which is inherent in the particular area might be taken up. And it would be profitable for women, specially for those who have not got enough income to work in such industries.

“As regards the question of beggars, recommendations have come from many Branches. I am glad that we have become conscious of the beggars. The problem has been there for a long time. Attempts are being made in different provinces to solve this problem. The Governments should bring in legislation to remove the beggars from the cities. Beggary has no moral justification, beggars move in the streets with horrible contagious diseases. Government should set up Beggar Homes for the infirm and the disabled. With these words I second this resolution. I hope you all will support it.

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan coming next, said: I have great pleasure in supporting this resolution which Mrs. Rajan Nehru has so ably put forward. I wish to say a few words especially with regard to the Beggar problem. I know that this question has drawn the attention of many people, especially women living in cities. Beggars are on the increase in cities. We have been carrying on propoganda in our Branch in Madras for a proper legislation. Some of the members went in deputation to the Corporation of Madras asking it to take suitable action, in establishing Homes and Vocational Institutions for the disabled and able bodied beggars. I think it is time for all of us to carry on a country-wide agitation about this very serious problem which is getting worse and worse every

day. It is up to us to see that such unfortunates should not be merely blamed for wandering in the streets. They do so because they have no homes to be sent to. I don't think that indiscriminate charity should continue, which perhaps is done to satisfy our own conscience and to express our sympathy. People seem to think that by such charity they get some **punyam**; the same instinct can be used in a more organised way. Money which is now given in dribbles can be collected. There are so many people who give, say even one pice a week for charity; or some give on the birthday of children or on important festive occasions a certain sum to be spent on charity. The rice and other things that are given may also be pooled together, and all this may well be utilised for the food and clothing of the beggars in Homes. There are many ways of supporting these Homes and preventing loitering of able-bodied beggars and the disabled and the infirm. Let us not encourage begging in streets. I am happy to say that the Madras Corporation has taken up this work seriously chiefly due to our agitation. For a certain number of the able-bodied beggars, vocational training is given. A few pice contributed by each would make for the support of such Homes and for the stopping of the nuisance of beggars in streets. I do wish, therefore, that the women who belong to the All-India Women's Conference will take up this work not only in cities but in rural areas also. There is no other way of solving this problem other than providing work-houses for beggars instead of letting them wander in the streets. These industrial homes would give livelihood to so many people and the habit of begging would decrease. I do hope that this resolution would be put into immediate operation in our Branches. I wish that you give your best attention to this important problem and give relief to the poor people.

Mrs. Kulsum Sayani (Bombay) in supporting the resolution, said: I would like to suggest a practical but a very small scheme for tackling the Beggar nuisance. Several societies have tried to solve this intricate and a very important and vast problem and we have all come to the conclusion that without State aid and legislation we cannot go far. But how long are we going to wait quietly in that pious hope? I think we could establish Community Kitchens in several parts of the city or village, where in return for money for food, the beggars could be made to do work and pay in kind and their produce could be marketed or sold. I think this would inculcate the spirit of work and self-respect amongst them. As for the money part of it I had heard Mahatma Gandhi say that real work never suffered for want of money and I have experienced the truth of this statement in my Literacy work. Once Mr. Munshi, ex-Minister

of Bombay, had made some calculations regarding the charity given in money daily by the Bombay public - which amounted to thousands of rupees per day. Of course, we need an organised society to collect and pool this money. What could we not do for the beggars with so much money daily? It would enable us to force the hands of the Government as well. Community Kitchens would be a small beginning indeed, but all things begun in small scale but well done accumulate big results.

Mrs. Subhadramma (Andhra) supported the resolution in Telugu. The Report then was put to vote and passed unanimously.

The President : Shrimati Kamaladevi will now present the Report of Group III B—Health Section.

Shrimati Kamaladevi in placing the following Report on Health Section informed the House that Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade was responsible for collection of a good deal of materials now incorporated in the Report :

Group III. B. Health Section.

Nursing.

This Group appreciates the work started on a study of the Nursing Profession and its problems in India by Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade and feel that all Branches should give the fullest co-operation to this scheme of work.

Resolution. 1. "This Conference feels that not only in view of the emergency situation caused by the war, but in view of the fact that good nursing is absolutely essential to the health of the country all facilities in hospitals, maternity homes and families be given to encourage and improve the Nursing Profession with special regard to better conditions of work, of housing, better salaries, and more extensive and cheaper training facilities."

Health.

After discussion of the health work now going on in the various Branches represented by our Group members we considered some of the more pressing problems. It was suggested that our members could do much more to encourage women to make fuller use of existing ante-natal clinics while endeavouring to have various bodies, such as Municipalities and Local Boards, establish more of these centres.

We feel that considering the increase in prices of food stuffs the problem of providing a balanced diet is much more acute. With regard to

this, members are suggested to consult a small pamphlet on Dietetics and Nutrition by Dr. Akroyd of the Conoor Institute.

It was emphasised that the physical culture and knowledge of hygiene in many schools was neglected and we feel that the Branches should make every effort to urge school authorities to provide adequate facilities for physical culture, regular medical examination, and discourage students from eating unclean food purchased from vendors and provide their own food stalls.

This Conference wishes to impress on the Branches and Sub-Branches the necessity of maintaining interest in the health problems of the country and where circumstances do not permit of intensive work in all fields, to concentrate on one or two problems of pressing importance in their area to take up as the work for the year.

For this purpose we recommend that a choice might be made from the following :—

- 1) Family Spacing; 2) Ante-natal, Maternity and Baby Care.
- 3) Child Hygiene; 4) Diet; 5) Health services available from Local Boards or Municipalities; 6) Public Health, i. e. cleaner food supplies, fly prevention, vendor control, etc.; 7) Specialised Education and Care of handicapped children; 8) Prevention of communicable Disease and Control of Epidemics; 9) Physical Culture for Girls and women; 10) Maternity and Child Welfare Centres; 11) Health Education in Schools.

In order to popularise and give practical shape to the work we recommend that full use be made of lectures, Lantern Slides, discussion groups, newspaper articles, that every effort should be made to have Municipalities and Local Bodies apply present laws or institute new laws whose object should be to secure purer foods.

Shrimati Kamalabai Nimbkar (Bombay) Said: I am particularly glad to second the first resolution. The importance of the Nursing Profession has not always been fully appreciated and certainly in India there is considerable scope for improvement in this field. Rani Rajwade has made an excellent beginning for us with her questionnaire and I do hope that all members present will, on their return to their local Branches, see that her questionnaire is filled in at once if it has not already been done.

The second resolution I hereby second. Health Work enters into almost all our activities in one form or another. However, I do feel that each branch should undertake one or two health projects in the coming year. They should be separate from the incidental health teaching of other activities or should co-ordinate the health aspects of the other activities. I was fortunate enough to have worked in a Health Demonstration Centre in New York City for over two years before coming to India. From my experience there and since in India I would suggest that we work in the homes rather than in institutions wherever possible.

Dr. Ratnamma Isaac (Mysore) said: In supporting the resolution I would like to draw the attention of this Conference that just as in the Beggar Problem we not only should ask Municipalities and Government to do their part but also do ourselves what lies in our hand by refusing to give alms to able-bodied beggars, so also, in order that our sisters may take the full benefit of ante-natal clinics, we should persuade them in season and out of season that they should avail themselves of the benefits of ante-natal clinics started in their midst. Because of the ignorance of many in our country, maternal mortality and infantile death rate are very great. We ask the Government to start clinics and maternity homes but we forget to do our part of the service sometimes. So in supporting this resolution I would earnestly plead with our sisters that we should all try to help in every way possible in this matter.

The Report was put to vote and declared adopted.

The President: Mrs. Sen will present the Report of Group I-Education.

Mrs. Hannah Sen placed before the House the following Report of Group I - Education:—

GROUP I - EDUCATION.

The Members of the Educational Group, with Mrs. Hannah Sen as President, and Miss Leilamani Naidu and Miss Sushila Pandit as Secretaries, have, after due examination of, and discussion on, the various problems referred to them, arrived at the conclusion herein set forth as recommendations for the consideration of the Conference.

1. Minimum Period of Primary Education.

In order to prevent wastage and ensure permanent literacy and the necessary degree of mental maturity, the Group holds the opinion that in all public schemes of education the age of admission for pupils to

primary or basic schools, as distinguished from nursery schools and kindergartens, should be fixed at five plus and the minimum period of compulsion should be seven years. The age of admission must necessarily be set at five plus owing to the economic conditions obtaining among the masses in this country which make it difficult to divert the time and energies of children at a later stage from work which is imperative as a supplementary source of income to their families. It is hoped that an improvement in the economic sphere will automatically result in a rise in the minimum age of admission from five to seven plus.

2. The Medium of Instruction in Schools and Colleges.

This Group considers it desirable that the medium of instruction at all stages of education be the mother tongue, Hindustani being taught as a compulsory second language with a view to achieve a *lingua franca* for India. It recommends, therefore, that the Universities and all other Educational authorities be requested to prepare comprehensive schemes for the progressive realisation of this ideal.

3. Employment of Married Women in the Services.

As one of the main difficulties in the way of spreading education is the insufficiency of women teachers, and as it is the inalienable right of every individual to seek employment, this Group deplors the recent tendency to eliminate married women teachers. It urges, however, that the employment of such women in the educational service should be so regulated as to ensure the maximum amount of efficient work on the one hand and good motherhood and the well-being of the home on the other. The Group suggests that the Standing Committee of the A. I. W. C. be asked to undertake a thorough investigation into the present position of married women teachers all over India and to formulate measures for dealing with the problem, taking into account, and placing in their correct perspective, the points of view both of the employer and the employee.

The Group strongly urges that, in the employment of women as teachers and lecturers, no discrimination be made as between the married and unmarried woman, the test, equally applicable to both, being a guarantee of continued efficiency in service.

4. Composition of Secondary Boards of Education.

This subject had been specially referred to the Group in view of the Bengal Secondary Education Bill of 1940. As the Bill has, however, recently been withdrawn in the face of public criticism, it is felt that the need of taking up this subject does not arise at present.

5. Training of Workers.

This Group welcomes the Standing Committee's appointment of a Sub-Committee to devise ways and means for the training of workers in various directions who will help the members of the A. I. W. C. to extend and intensify their contact with the women of India.

6. Adult Education.

The Group followed with interest the full texts of schemes for Adult Education presented by Mrs. S. N. Ray and Mrs. Kulsum Saiyani, and discussed with them in detail several points of practical importance falling within the following main categories :—

- (a) Method of approach—house to house visiting—organising of entertainments, lectures, etc.
- (b) Syllabus—subjects and text books.
- (c) The training of teachers in the Lauback and Basic methods.
- (d) The introduction of handicrafts as a source of supplementary income—marketing of products, etc.
- (e) Libraries and Newspapers as a means of preventing lapse into illiteracy, and also the formation of a permanent club to maintain post-literacy interests.

The President, speaking in Hindustani, gave a gist of the recommendations of the Group.

Miss Sushila Kumari Pandit (Baroda) supported the recommendations in Hindustani.

Mrs. Kamalamma Dasappa (Mysore) referred to the first recommendation regarding the minimum period of primary education, and opined that on the ground of health of a child, learning of A B C D should not be allowed to commence until the 6th year.

The six recommendations were then put to vote separately and each was declared accepted. Finally, the President put the whole Group Report on Education for adoption and declared it accepted.

The President : Mrs. Ray will move a resolution on Dr. Tagore's Memorial.

Mrs. Renuka Ray (Delhi) said: Madam President, the resolution I have to put before you runs thus:—

"As Vishwabharati embodies the life work of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore this Conference considers that the best way of paying homage to his memory is to ensure support to this institution.

"In this connection it calls on all its Branches to collect funds for this purpose."

In placing this resolution before the House I feel sure that I have the whole-hearted support of every delegate. As Mahatma Gandhi put it "Vishwabharati is Gurudev's legacy to India." We can pay no better homage to his memory than to ensure that it becomes a thing of permanence. Gurudev was much troubled in his last years as to the future of his International University-Vishwabharati-into whose making he has given so greatly the wealth of his genius. An All-India Women's Memorial Committee has been formed to raise funds for the Vishwabharati and they have appealed to us for help. Each Branch should raise funds and send it on to either the Hon. General Secretary or the Hon. Treasurer of the A. I. W. C. so that we can send a consolidated amount in the name of the A. I. W. C. to this Women's Memorial Committee. There are various ways in which we can raise funds in the Branches—by door to door collections, by having Flag days, donations and by arranging to act some of the Poet's plays and selling tickets for these occasions. There may be other ways of which you can perhaps think—but before I conclude I only want to stress the importance of each and everyone of us being active in this matter. It is the surest and most practical way in which India can enshrine the memory of one who has played so great a part in raising the status of our Country, the world over.

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan (Madras) next said: I have very great pleasure in seconding the resolution put forward by Mrs. Ray. I don't think that there is anybody who would not be willing to help for this memorial for Gurudev. There is no doubt that by this service we would be helping in the progress of Vishwabharati and I hope every delegate would interest herself in collecting funds for this memorial. It is not only in India that Gurudev is known and his work appreciated but in all parts of the world. In America his name is known even by the man in the street. They know of only two names in India that of Dr. Tagore and of Mahatma Gandhi. I am sure that funds will be coming in for Vishwabharati and we the women of India must take our full share in this work and thus pay our last tribute to our great Poet Dr. Rabindranath Tagore.

Shrimati Kameswaramma next supported the resolution in Telugu. She said: The name **Rabindranath Tagore** is a household word. The physical body of Tagore lost its form but his soul ever lives in people's hearts by his great literary productions giving the Light to all those who seek it. His creation of **Viswabharati** in which name and institution are embodied the highest ideals of life, is perpetuated to disseminate among the present and the future generations the noblest ideals for which the greatest man of the world lived and inspired. It is the life-giving and light-giving memorial of **Dr. Rabindranath Tagore** and it is for this we are called upon to collect funds and send them to our Conference Secretary so that in the name of the All-India Women's Conference the contribution of the women of India might go to that memorial institution and keep up that divine torch ever giving light to the world.

The Resolution was put to vote and was carried unanimously.

The President then called upon the delegates to help the Fund and send in their contributions through their Branch Representatives to the office of the A. I. W. C.

Miss Leilamani Naidu, Member-in-charge of Constitution, was next asked by the President to place before the house the Constitution of Branches and Constituent (Sub-)Branches, as adopted by the Standing Committee.

Miss Naidu put forward the following proposals :—

Constitution of Branches and Constituent (Sub-)Branches.

1. Constituent Branch.

Any group of ten members, which accepts the aims and objects of the A. I. W. C., may, subject to the approval of the Standing Committee, become a Constituent Branch and carry on the work of the A. I. W. C.

2. Branch.

A Branch shall be an association of the A. I. W. C., in a specified area, with a minimum membership of 50, and shall consist of all the Constituent Branches within that area.

In event of there being only one Constituent Branch in a given area, its provisional recognition as a Branch shall be decided on by the Standing Committee.

Specified Areas : Ajmere-Merwara, Andhra, Assam, Baroda, Bengal East, Bengal West, Berar, Bihar, Bombay City and Suburbs, Calcutta City and Suburbs, C. P. North, C. P. South, Cochin, Delhi, Gujarat, Gwalior, Hyderabad-Deccan, Hyderabad-Sind, Indore, Jath, Karnatak, Kashmir, Kolhapur, Konkan, Madras City and Suburbs, Maharastra, Malabar, Mysore, N. W. F. P., Orissa (Utkal), Phaltan, Punjab Central, Punjab East, Sangli, Sind, Tamil Nad, Travancore, U. P. Agra, U. P. Oudh.

3. Representation.

Constituent Branches shall be entitled to ask for the privilege, in rotation, of electing the Branch Representative, S. C. M.

4. All Constituent Branches shall be entitled to receive, for information only, circulars and other literature from the Head Office of the A. I. W. C. on payment of Rs. 7/- for one set or Rs. 10/- for 3 sets, annually to Honorary Treasurer, A. I. W. C.

5. Every Branch shall frame its own Constitution in keeping with the Articles and Bye-Laws of the A. I. W. C. Association and subject to the approval of the A. I. W. C. Executive Committee to which all proposed amendments and alterations also shall be submitted.

6. Membership.

Any woman in India, over the age of 16, shall be eligible to become a member of a Branch of the A. I. W. C, on payment of a subscription to, and in accordance with the rules of, that Branch.

7. Only Branch Members shall be entitled to attend the annual session of the A. I. W. C. as Branch Delegates. They shall be nominated and elected by the members of the Branch.

8. (a) The quota of representation for each Branch shall be determined by allotting one delegate to a number of members which is equal to the total number of members divided by the number of delegates.

(b) The number of delegates to any annual session of the Conference shall be fixed arbitrarily by the Standing Committee at its half-yearly meeting.

(c) The quota of representation shall be based on the half-yearly returns of membership submitted by the Branches.

Example :—(1941) Total A. I. W. C. Membership	...	8,000
Total No. of delegates	200
Therefore, One Delegate for Every	...	40
		members.
If a Branch has 400 members, it gets	$\frac{400}{40}$... 10 Delegates.

After the acceptance of each item of the proposals by the House, the whole Report was put before the House by the President and it was declared accepted.

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In concluding the Proceedings of the plenary session of the Conference the President, Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, said :

Friends, The work of this session has now ended. And by this time to-morrow we shall have dispersed to our places and bound to our activities. I realise that each delegate present must have come at considerable inconvenience and I should like to express my grateful thanks to all for their kind co-operation in the work.

I have been to several Conferences. I think I can say that the arrangements here are as good as anywhere else. I should express my grateful thanks for the arrangements made by the Reception Committee. I know how difficult it is to get enough workers, public support and things of that sort. But the arrangements made here are good and no pains have been spared in helping delegates and members of the Standing Committee and making our work successful. Volunteers are there to do their duty. They are working day and night, and are always helpful, obliging, smiling, and efficient. I was really very much impressed by them. I wish that in our respective provinces such efficient training be given in such an efficient manner as Andhra Desa has done in this session.

I do not quite know how to thank the Secretary of the Reception Committee. Being a Secretary is a thankless task. Mrs. Kameswaramma bore all the troubles always rushing from one place to another and looking after everybody and the needs of the delegates in connection with the Conference. I should also like to thank all the servants who worked in these two camps for the needs of us all and for the needs of visitors. It is so often that we forget those who minister to our service. I also express my gratitude to the Yuvarani of Pithapuram and to all the citizens of this town who have extended their hospitality to us by lending us their cars, giving petrol and helping in so many hundred ways; but for their willing assistance we would not have had such a successful session like this at this critical time. If there is any particular section connected with the work of our Conference whose name I have not mentioned I hope they will accept our thankfulness on my behalf and on behalf of my delegates for their contribution to the success of the session.

I would like to say a word about the work in the future. Ever since you honoured me by electing me as your President, I have felt the responsibility on my shoulders. Ordinarily I would not have found the burden so heavy inasmuch as my loyalty to the Conference is a devoted loyalty and I also have undertaken other duties as Congresswoman and Congress worker. But I am conscious of the great responsibility that I have undertaken as a responsible worker. Having accepted the Presidentship for the year 1942, I realise that I should do my best and work out the resolutions we have passed now and in the years past. In this year we have to help this Conference with all the Schemes we have adopted by applying them and working them out. And I appeal to you to render all the help that is required. Of course an individual can do little but if we work unitedly each link would be a part of a chain and the links in this would continue to give greater strength to the cause. I hope that we will all strive to see that membership is very much increased; I request the delegates to devote some time for the work of the Conference and its ideals so that more and more women are persuaded to join the Conference, not only women of the educated class, but women of every class, women from the town and the village and the factory, in order to build up a really representative organisation which can claim to be heard and will be heard with respect both in this and in other countries.

I am glad this Conference has already earned the esteem not only here but also elsewhere and it is really growing into a responsible body of women. We not only pass resolutions but see that the resolutions are implemented. We have this year launched two schemes; the Scheme of a Model Village is a very interesting one and in it we can show how much work can be done in the Indian village. The Scheme is in able hands and I hope that it materialises very soon. Miss Sarabhai has kindly consented to start the Scheme in Gujarat. Miss Sarabhai who has done much good work, needs no introduction. Perhaps some of our delegates know the valuable work that is being done in the Jyoti Sangh. They run an educational institution for women and another Home for deserted women. The services rendered by the Institutions conducted by Miss Sarabhai are growing with amazing rapidity. With the co-operation of Miss Sarabhai and others our Scheme will certainly be successful. I have no hesitation in telling you that Mrs. Kamalamma Dasappa will also give her active support in building up the village scheme and I am looking forward to the day when she will prepare her model village for us to hold our Conference there.

The second Scheme which we have taken up this year is that for the training of our workers. As delegates may be aware, because we

have not got trained and experienced workers we find ourselves handicapped at any stage in our work. Many good schemes fall to the ground because there are no trained workers to work amongst women in the country. Therefore, it has been decided that we should start a training camp for workers who will be trained to implement our resolutions and put them into practice. I have no doubt that this scheme will be a success with the co-operation from every delegate, I hope you will all endeavour to send proper women for training in the near future and I am quite sure that if we all co-operate with each other the scheme would show good result. We might also seek the co-operation from other women workers of other institutions working on similar lines.

We have passed other resolutions most of which we have been dealing with for some time. Lady Rama Rau's Emergency Resolution requires the members of the A. I. W. C. to form a Volunteer Corps. Lady Rama Rau has explained it to you. It is to volunteer assistance in difficult times not only by taking to nursing but also in various other ways,—say in the case of evacuation, in air raids, and in allaying panic amongst masses. This is very, very important, because in the kind of situation we are facing to-day it becomes necessary to have such a Group when panic is spreading in towns. I think that if we support such a Volunteer Corps we can do far more useful work than the official agencies. I am quite sure in our respective towns we will help to stimulate confidence when it is really necessary to do so; the public would be willing to accept our suggestions and perhaps work more efficiently than under the advice of the official agencies in those areas. So I request that this resolution should be implemented soon.

I do hope to have personal contacts with all the constituencies during this year. As far as possible I shall try to do a certain amount of touring. If we cannot do anything else we can cement our bonds of unity in our various projects. We will do our best even if we cannot show anything new and spectacular.

Now, lastly, I have to make an appeal for funds. I think that even to-day in spite of the difficult time if the benevolent people are correctly approached with an organised effort on our part the funds will be available for putting all our schemes into operation. I request you all to do your very best for collecting the money required for our Conference because many things fall through for want of funds. I thank you for the kind and sympathetic manner in which you have enabled me to bring the Conference to a successful end. I wish you good-bye and thank you.



Delegates to the XVI Session of the All-India Women's Conference, Cocanada.

The President then declared the results of election of Office-bearers as follows :—

Mrs. Urmila Mehta remains General Secretary.

Mrs. Billimoria remains Honorary Treasurer.

The following are the Vice-Presidents elected :—

1. Lady Rama Rau.
2. Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan.
3. Srimathi Kamaladevi.
4. Yuvarani Vedavathi of Pithapuram.
5. Mrs. Hannah Sen, and
6. Mrs. Asaf Ali.

Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru rising, said :

Madam President and Friends, I just want to say a few words before we all disperse. I feel that the responsibility of holding this Conference at this critical juncture to a very great extent has been chiefly mine, and I feel a great sense of relief that we have come to the conclusion of our labours and all has gone off so well. As you all know there was a demand on the part of certain members for the postponement of the Conference on account of the emergent conditions arising out of war. I felt and several members and delegates agreed with me, that the Conference should not be postponed. I therefore feel that we have good reasons to rejoice at the successful and peaceful termination of the Conference. While sitting here in our session we were hardly conscious of the fact that a devastating war was going on just across our borders and that it was coming closer and closer to our doors. I am glad indeed that at such a critical time as this so many delegates were able to come.

I associate myself with all that our President said in giving thanks to the Reception Committee and to all those who shared the responsibilities of the Reception Committee and contributed to its success. I cannot help saying a word of appreciation for the wonderful work of Kameshwari. She is an old friend of mine and we know each other well. I really felt and I frankly say this, that I doubted her capacity for accomplishing this heavy task. But it was a pleasant surprise for me to see that she applied herself to this hard work with such excellent results. She has paid attention to every detail and has managed things with great goodwill and vigour. What surprises me is that she has kept up her energy to the end. When the invitation for this Conference was extended to us from Andhra and even

later, I was doubtful of its success. But my happiness is beyond words, especially to see that the young ladies here have made this session such a unique success. Kameshwari started her work by touring throughout the whole province and awakening people to the needs of the Conference. Such extensive work has not been done anywhere else. Hundreds and thousands have responded to the call of the Conference. It is indeed a matter for congratulation that in a short time, 200 volunteers collected together and got their training. The excellent way in which they conducted our camps redounds to the credit of the training received. This is not a small gain. Some may think that the Reception Committee increased its burdens unnecessarily, but I can say that it was done so for good purpose. This little training that the girls have received would be very useful as a beginning for the more extensive volunteer training contemplated by the All-India Women's Conference. The conference has passed not only the resolution and the scheme of its work, but with this little band of volunteer workers, it seems as if the work of implementing the resolution has started already. I hope with the co-operation of all of you and under the leadership of our experienced President we shall be able to get a great many things accomplished during the course of this year.

Mrs. M. E. Cousins said: Fellow Delegates, Madam President, Friends, The cheerful duty has been given to me of expressing thanks to all those who have come to the Conference and to the various people connected with the Conference. I have a large standard of comparison because I have attended many conferences. Today I am referring only to what has been done here. We have passed in the conference several schemes touching important questions. Here we particularly notice how ably our retiring President Shrimati Rameswari Nehru directed the whole year's work of the Conference and even in the last moment proved to be our philosopher and guide. We have again the fact that Mrs. Billimoria and Mrs. Urmila Mehta have been re-elected to their respective offices as Treasurer and General Secretary. That Mrs. Urmila Mehta is extremely popular is shown by her re-election. Mrs. Billimoria is very efficient in keeping our accounts in the best order.

Then with regard to the Reception Committee, we have been most happy with its Chairwoman, the Yuvarani of Pithapuram and I hope she will continue her interest in the A. I. W. C. It may be hoped that she will become the Chairwoman of the whole district. For all the good reception given to us our thanks are not only due to her but to the whole family

of Pithapuram. They have given the Conference a delightful reception at the Tea Party the other day and we thank them for it. Then, I come again to Mrs. Kameswaramma. She is given too much credit. You don't give me credit for her! But from the infancy of this Women's Conference I have been training her to be the excellent dynamic organiser she has proved herself to us these past days!

Again, you are very indebted to those who ran the Exhibition. Nothing has been said about it. We want to clothe ourselves in Indian material and here in this Exhibition you have been given all that is best. I am quite sure, we all felt happy to see this admirable Exhibition. Not merely are you shown the Andhra Khadi and Swadeshi products, but the best Andhra art you also found in the Exhibition. The Art side is well represented by the Ramarao Art Society of Rajahmundry, and very excellent pictures were exhibited. We thank the artists and the organisers of the Exhibition. We also thank the artists in the musical entertainment. Music in these parts is very good. We have had recently some discussion in South India with reference to the claim of Telugu people on Carnatic music. Andhras are very well known for their very sweet music and the language they use in the songs is pronounced to be one of its chief characteristics. We have had very delightful Indian music here.

I have seen many Volunteers in many different Conferences. It is quite invidious to say anything about the different conferences, but we have nowhere had such a good number of College volunteers. Here they number 150 and these girls were well trained for their duties. And now I come to the City Fathers. I don't know if there are City Mothers. We have heard there are some here. We are very thankful for all their valuable assistance. We particularly thank the Reception Committee which gave us the morning meal, lunch and so on. We are glad that we could have contact with so many women of the districts and that we have been enabled to get on comfortably in every way.

Mrs. J. R. Doctor said: I have very great pleasure in seconding the resolution moved by Mrs. Cousins. She has expressed what we all feel, and I will not repeat what she has said. But I wish to express my personal thanks for the care and comforts I have received during my stay at Cocanada. The Chairwoman, the energetic Honorary Secretary and members of the Reception Committee have helped to make this Conference a success and I have not words to thank them adequately. I have called the Hon. Secretary energetic, because after the work she has done these days, and

especially today, I did not expect to see Shrimati Kameswaramma here so fresh and untired and also ready for a speech.

I believed I was strong in Geography. I know the places and mountains and rivers hidden in the remotest part of the world, but this is the first time I know that there was a town called Cocanada in India. And it is therefore very creditable that a town like Cocanada undertook the responsibilities of a Conference at such a short notice and under very trying circumstances during these difficult times. Once again I thank the Reception Committee for all their kindness.

Miss Mustaffa Khan said : I am so pleased with the work of the volunteers and the arrangements of the Reception Committee and I, on behalf of you all, thank them for all that they did to make us comfortable here. I wholeheartedly support this resolution of Vote of Thanks.

Mrs. J. Sitamahalakshmi (Tanuka) said in Telugu : This is the first time this Women's Conference is held in Andhra Desa. Not only that, we feel it our great fortune to have Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit as our President for this session. On behalf of us all I express our grateful thanks to her. Also many delegates have responded in these hard times by their presence in the Conference and we have been able to have impressionable contact. My thanks are due to them. I thank the Standing Committee members also for coming here with great inconvenience.

Mrs. B. Kameswaramma said : Madam President, Sisters, I am given too much of love and affection and compliments that I am really feeling shy to appear before you all. But I do not know whether I deserve it or not. On behalf of you all I must thank our able President who has been able to bring the proceedings of the Conference to a close so successfully. I have great pleasure in thanking Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, whose advice and guidance at every step and whose inspiring presence, we value very much. On behalf of the Reception Committee I offer my grateful thanks to all the delegates and the members of the Standing Committee who have come here after a long and tedious journey and in spite of the threatening black-outs and war conditions and fears that Cocanada would be bombed. It is extremely kind of you all to have said that the Reception Committee made splendid arrangements but we are aware of our shortcomings. In a place like Cocanada it is very difficult to make adequate arrangements. But it is your kindness that makes you say that you have been comfortable.

The success of the Conference is mainly due to the fact that I have behind me the whole of Andhra Desa. I am greatly indebted to my co-Secretaries, who worked day and night with pleasure sharing all responsibilities. I have great pleasure in offering my sincere thanks to the Maharaja Saheb of Pithapuram who took a personal interest in our Conference and was the host of Mrs. Pandit. It is because of his kindness that we have been able to secure the spacious College and hostel buildings. The Venue of the Conference is also shifted from Rajahmundry to Cocanada because of this convenience. We also value the Maharaja Saheb's presence here during the Conference session and thank him for his encouraging address. I am thankful to the Yuvarani who has all along been with us sharing the worry and anxiety of the Reception Committee.

My thanks are to the Principal and the Staff of the College for having helped in several ways.

Let me tell you, my friends, that the success of the Conference is due to the whole hearted co-operation and support of the District Board and the Municipality and the public. The President of the District Board, Mr. Pallamaraju, and his staff contributed greatly for the success of the Conference. So also Mr. Ramasomayajulu, the City Father, placed the services of his Municipal staff at our disposal. We had the active co-operation of the public who regarded the Conference as a domestic function.

Last but not least, our volunteers who deserve great compliments for their strenuous and selfless services. I am deeply grateful to them and their sight was a delight to everyone of you.

I owe, again, so much to Mrs. Cousins, my grand mother, and to Shrimati Ammu Swaminadban. It was Mrs. Cousins who wanted the Conference to be held in Andhra, and I obeyed her command. Once again I thank each and everyone of you for the kindness you showed us.

Mrs Kameswaramma then requested the President to present a medal, offered by the Volunteers to their Captain Mr. Ramachandra Rao, M. A. The President was pleased to present the medal to the Captain.

Mr. T. Ramachandra Rao thanked the President and the delegates for doing him the honour.

The President: I take it that you have carried the vote of thanks with acclamation. I should like to add one word. While being thankful to you for inviting me to be the President for one year, I am more concerned with the work we have to do. I am sure that I shall pass a very happy year

as your President but a public worker has no preferences. The problems of the country and the constructive programme that we have set before us would require the energies of more than one person and would take time far beyond the tenure of one President. I am not quite sure how much I can help you in these matters for my work takes me all over India and I cannot long remain at one place. I visit every province. If I can be of any use to you I am at your service. I would like to say one more thing in closing. I am conscious of your difficulties in these critical times. Some of you have the war emergency work. In some places it is not possible for women to meet as easily as we have met here. The responsibilities facing us in our future activities are perhaps greater than ever. While parting I would appeal to you to do whatever work you can and continue our various activities in the various provinces. In this matter you have to give a lead to the country and work with fearlessness and courage in order to create peace and good will in the trying times through which our tragic world is passing.

At this stage, Mrs. Kamamma Dasappa requested the President to allow her to address a few words to which the President agreed.

Mrs. Kamamma H. Dasappa said: I have not come here to thank the Reception Committee or the President or any other. I know they do not want any more thanks from me as they have already been thanked by many others. But I wish to say a few words about one or two things that impressed me.

I was impressed by the order and silence that the audience maintained during the session. Even at the Town Hall yesterday where there was a large gathering of Women and Children, there was perfect order. This is rather a rare thing to be found at women's meetings. Another thing that impressed me was that there was a large number of Telugu speeches which shows that the Andhra Women are good speakers. Last year when this Conference met in Bangalore, there was hardly a single Kannada speech. Certainly it was not the fault of the members of the All-India Women's Conference but I wish Kannada Women also learn to make speeches. Lastly, the arrangements here were not so highly westernised as before but much simpler. This will prepare you for a much simpler session to be held in our model village five years hence to which our President made a reference.

The President then announced that the New Standing Committee will meet at 4 o'clock in the Arts College.

The session at Cocanada terminated at 1-30 p. m.

Besides the Group Findings and Resolutions, the following Resolutions were passed in the Open Session at Cocanada :—

Resolutions.

1. Condolence Resolution.

(a) **Condolence on Dr. Tagore's Death.** This Conference puts on record its deep sense of loss at the passing away of the great poet and philosopher Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. He was a liberator of all suppressed humanity and a great advocate of the cause of women. Vishwa Bharati is the legacy he has left to India and it is the duty of every Indian to support this Institution in memory of its founder.

(b) This Conference expresses its sorrow at the demise of :

Shri C. Y. Chintamani
 Shri S. Srinivasa Iyengar
 Shri Nyapati Subba Rao Pantulu
 Shri M. Rangayya
 Mrs. Mahalakshmi Sunder

(c) This Conference records its feeling of loss of the prominent social worker Mrs. Hirabai Tata who was an outstanding personality and did great service for the cause of women in India.

2. **On Hostels.** We draw the attention of the public and the authorities concerned to the growing number of girls in schools and colleges and the inadequate provision made for properly supervised hostels, and urge that the matter should receive immediate attention.

3. **On Price Control.** In view of the abnormal rise of the price of essential commodities and its consequent repercussion this Conference requests the Government, both Central and Provincial to enforce the control of prices without delay.

4. **On War and Peace.** This conference is of the opinion

(a) that permanent peace cannot be achieved except on the principles of freedom and justice equally applicable to all nations and races and without an immediate and fundamental change in the present structure ; for a post-war world can be reconstructed only out of policies initiated and operated during the present war ;

(b) that Britain's statements regarding her war aims cannot make any moral appeal to the peoples of the world so long as she refuses to alter her present policy in regard to India.

This Conference reiterates its abhorrence of war and declares that if war is persisted in it must inevitably lead not only to meaningless destruction but also to the deterioration of moral values. It, therefore, firmly believes that human progress is possible only in a world free from military domination and based on the acceptance of international disarmament.

5. **On Communal Harmony.** Realising that women have a responsible part in bringing about communal harmony, this Conference appeals to all women to work earnestly for such a unity, so that this communal problem would not continue to be an impediment to India's national progress.

6. **On Scout Movement.** This Conference expresses its appreciation of the Girl Scout Movement as sponsored by the Hindustan Scout Association. All educational institutions and women's associations should help in promoting the progress of this movement, and help in the work of providing education in good citizenship to our girls.

7. **Educated Unemployed.** This Conference is of opinion that the relief of the educated unemployed men and women, which is developing into a grave problem should immediately invite the serious attention of the Government of India and Provincial Governments to formulate a comprehensive scheme for the amelioration of this evil by opening more Vocational Training Centres and Industrial Institutions and by exploring various other avenues, which would absorb at least some of the educated unemployed for the present. This Conference also exhorts the Public to fully co-operate with the Government in finding a practical solution for this ever-increasing problem. It also draws the attention of the Government to the fact that the gravity of the situation is likely to be greatly accentuated after the War.

8. **On Vigilance Work.** This Conference is of opinion that Vigilance work has now become a recognised line of social work, and it therefore, recommends to the Government that it may be raised to the status of all other Government service.

9. **On Emergency and Women Voluntary Corps.** In view of the critical times and the danger of air attacks, such as Rangoon has experienced recently, to all parts of India, this Conference resolves that instructions be issued to all its Branches to concentrate in the immediate future on training their members for humanitarian work.

This Conference is emphatically of the opinion that the duty of the Branches of an all-India Women's organisation is to play their part in developing centres where their members will be trained to help the citizens in moments of crisis.

Towards this end it suggests that the following schemes be undertaken and that an A. I. W. C. Voluntary Corps be formed independently of other organisations.

- Schemes of Work:**
- (a) Allaying panic among the masses;
 - (b) Assisting in the evacuation of women and children from the threatened areas;
 - (c) Arranging for first aid and emergency nursing courses;
 - (d) Facilitating the distribution of food and other necessities in the affected areas;
 - (e) Helping in protective measures after air attacks;
 - (f) Tackling internal disruption.

10. On Civil Liberties. In these times when the encroachment on national freedom threatens to destroy those inherent individual rights which are so precious a heritage of civilisation, this Conference associates itself with such organisations all over the world, as are striving to preserve the fundamental rights of all human beings, which, among others, are

- (a) the Right of Association;
- (b) the Security of Property;
- (c) the Liberty of Speech;
- (d) the Freedom of the Press;
- (e) the Freedom of Religious Worship;
- (f) the Freedom of Street Processions and Demonstrations; and above all
- (g) the Right of Personal Security, such as will guarantee that no individual shall be arrested or imprisoned unless it be by legal indictment and by process of the ordinary courts of law.

This Conference records its emphatic protest against the attempts to curtail unnecessarily the civil liberties of the Indian people and demands the immediate restoration of all such liberties.

11. Congratulations to Mysore Government. This Conference congratulates the Mysore Government on appointing a woman Doctor as Chief Medical Officer of all the Women's Hospitals in the State on terms of equal status with the senior Surgeon of all men's hospitals in the State.

12. Greetings to S. N. D. T. Indian Women's University. This Conference sends its greetings and congratulations to the S. N. D. T. Indian Women's University on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee and expresses its deep appreciation of the contribution made by this University to the education of women. It authorises the Honorary General Secretary to forward a copy of the above resolution to the Chancellor of the University.

13. A Request to the Benares Hindu University. In view of the fact that congestion and cancellation of concessions, due to war conditions, have made travel by rail most difficult, the Conference appeals to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and the Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindu University to create a centre this year, either at Bezwada or Rajahmundry where men and women students of Andhra Province may sit for their admission examinations.

14. Vishwabharati. As Vishwa Bharati embodies the life work of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore this Conference considers that the best way of paying homage to his memory is to ensure support to this Institution.

In this connection it calls on all its Branches to collect funds for this purpose.

DRAFT BUDGET FOR 1941-42.

Receipts.				Expenditure.			
	Rs.	as.	p.		Rs.	as.	p.
Balance on 1st Nov. 1941 ...	9,794	0	3	Hon. General Secretary's expenses ...	3,300	0	0
Delegation Fees ...	790	0	0	Printing and Stationery	1,500	0	0
Affiliation Fees ...	750	0	0	Hon. Treasurer's expenses ...	25	0	0
Donations ...	1,000	0	0	Roshni Printing expenses, etc. ...	500	0	0
Proceeds from Dramatic Entertainment by the Reception Committee, etc. ...	1,000	0	0	Special Subjects expenses ...	300	0	0
Subscription for extra copies of circulars	200	0	0	Contribution to W. W. Training Scheme	50	0	0
Sale of Annual Report	70	0	0	Affiliation Fee to International Alliance of Women ...	27	0	0
Interest on Bank Account	15	0	0	A. I. W. C. contribution towards Provident Fund	90	0	0
Miscellaneous Receipts	10	0	0	Hon. General Secretary's expenses for visiting a Branch ...	200	0	0
Interest on Fixed Deposit	250	0	0				
Subscription for Roshni	300	0	0				
Total	14,179	0	3	Total	5,992	0	0

**THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S
Receipts and Payments Account for the**

To Balance on 1st November 1940 :—	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Fixed Deposit in the National Bank ...	5,680	0	0			
" " Bank of India ...	2,931	12	0			
With the National Bank ...	2,276	9	3			
With Mrs. Mehta (Social Section) ...	15	15	6			
" " Doctor (Social Section) ...	36	12	0			
" Personal Assistant to Hon. Gen. Secretary ...	50	0	0			
" Hon. Gen. Secretary ...	114	13	6	11,105	14	3
„ Registration Fees of Delegates ...				1,610	0	0
„ Donation for A. I. W. C. Assn. Expenses ...				1,126	8	0
„ Affiliation Fees ...				700	4	0
„ Proceeds of Variety Entertainment ...				548	11	0
„ Constituencies and sub-constituencies :— for extra copies of circulars ...				205	0	0
„ Vice-Presidentship Subscription ...				6	0	0
„ Members-in-charge Subscription ...				9	0	0
„ Education Fund Association ...				5	0	0
„ Sale of Annual Report ...				57	12	0
„ Subscription for "Roshni" Magazine ...				2	0	0
„ Miscellaneous Receipts ...				2	6	0
„ Interest ...				5	13	0
„ Provident Fund Account ...				174	0	0
TOTAL Rs. ...				15,558	4	3

Examined and found Correct.

SORAB S. ENGINEER & Co.,

Incorporated Accountants,

Registered Accountants,

Hony. Auditors.

Bombay, 15th December, 1941.

The grateful thanks of the Association of the All-India Women's Conference are due to Messrs. Sorab S. Engineer & Co., for auditing the accounts of the Conference free of charge. This is a service which the firm has generously rendered us for many years and it has been of invaluable help to the Conference.

CONFERENCE.

Year ending 31st October, 1941.

	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
By Reception Committee Expenses ...				805	0	0
„ Hon. Gen. Secretary's Expenses* ...				1,566	9	6
„ Mrs. Hajrah Begum Ahmed's Travelling Expenses ...				78	12	6
„ Printing & Stationery ...				834	14	0
„ Salary of Personal Asst. to Hon. Gen. Secretary ...				1,740	0	0
„ A. I. W. C. Association's Contribution towards Prov. Fund ...				87	0	0
„ "Roshni" Magazine Printing Expenses (August, October & December Nos.)				419	3	0
„ Sub-Branches Organising Expenses :						
Tamil Nad ...	10	0	0			
Maharashtra ...	50	0	0	60	0	0
„ Advance to Andhra Branch for organising Conference ...				50	0	0
„ Postage for sending out A. I. W. C. Reports				43	8	0
„ Affiliation Fee to International Alliance of Women's Suffrage ...				27	4	0
„ Honorary Treasurer's Expenses ...				19	1	0
„ Adult Education Sub-Committee Expenses ...				3	9	0
„ Mrs. Seva Sing Gill as subscription towards Education Fund Association ...				20	0	0
„ Bank Commission & Charges ...				9	7	0
„ Bank & other Balances :—						
Fixed Deposit in the National Bank ...	5,680	0	0			
Fixed Deposit in Bank of India ...	2,931	12	0			
With National Bank ...	885	15	9			
" Fund " " A/c. 2 (Provident Fund) ...	174	0	0			
With Mrs. Mehta (Soc. Sec.) ...	15	15	6			
With Hon. Gen. Secretary ...	100	6	0			
With Hon. Treasurer ...	5	15	0	9,794	0	3
TOTAL Rs. ...				15,558	4	3

*Details of the office expenses of the Hon. Gen. Secretary :—

Travelling Expenses ...	229	2	0
Office Shifting Expenses ...	243	1	3
Printing, & Stationery ...	449	6	3
Postages, Telegrams, Telephones, Registration Charges etc.	349	15	6
Purchase and Hire of Furniture ...	103	8	0
House Rent ...	170	0	0
Repairs to Typewriter & Miscellaneous Expenses ...	19	6	6
Bank Commission ...	2	2	0
	1,566	9	6

Statement Regarding Registration.

The All-India Women's Conference has been duly registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 on the 18th July, 1930.

Memorandum of Association of the All-India Women's Conference.

1. The name of the Conference shall be "The All-India Women's Conference."
2. The Conference shall not engage in party politics but unite on such points as affect women and children.
3. The object of the Conference shall be :
 - (a) To promote in India the education of both sexes at all stages ;
 - (b) To deal with all questions affecting the welfare of women and children.

Signature of witnesses.

(Sd.) Sarojini Naidu.
 „ Sushama Sen
 „ Margaret Cousins
 „ Rameshwari Nehru
 „ A. L. Huidekoper
 „ Shareefah Hamid Ali
 „ Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya.

4. The Standing Committee Members become the Governing Body of the Association.

The Constitution of A.-I. W. C.

ARTICLE I.

Name :

The name of the organisation shall be "The Association of the All-India Women's Conference," hereinafter to be called the "A.-I.W.C."

ARTICLE II.

(a) Policy :

The A.-I. W. C. shall not belong to any political organisation nor take an active part in party politics, but shall be free to discuss and contribute to all questions and matters affecting the welfare of the people of India with particular reference to women and children.

(b) Aims and Objects :

1. To work actively for the general progress and welfare of women and children.
2. To inculcate in women and children the ideals of true citizenship.
3. To promote education along right lines.
4. To work and press for social reform.
5. To strive to establish equal rights and opportunities for all.
6. To work for a united India.
7. To set and demand a high moral standard in all departments of life.
8. To stand for international good will and world peace.

ARTICLE III.

Composition :

- (a) Patrons.
- (b) Office-Bearers.
- (c) Standing Committee.
- (d) Branches.

(a) Patrons :

- (i) Past Presidents.
- (ii) By special invitation of the A. - I. W. C.

(b) Office - Bearers :

- (i) President and Chairwoman.
- (ii) Six Vice-Presidents.

Note : A Chairwoman of the Standing Committee shall be elected for the year from amongst the Vice-Presidents in case the President does not desire to fill the office.

ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

- (iii) Treasurer.
- (iv) General Secretary.
- (v) Organising Secretary.
- (vi) Sectional Secretaries (if required).

Note: No paid officers of the A.-I. W. C. shall be entitled to vote.

- (c) **Standing Committee.**
 - (i) The Office-Bearers.
 - (ii) Members-in-charge of Special Subjects.
 - (iii) Branch Representatives.
 - (iv) The Liaison Officer in India.
 - (v) The Secretary of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association
 - (vi) **Ten Patrons:**
 - (a) The retiring President;
 - (b) 9 Patrons elected by the Standing Committee.
 - (vii) **Conveners of Sub-Committees** whenever such Sub-Committees are appointed.
 - (viii) **Co-opted Members**
 - (a) "Ordinary", not more than 7.
 - (b) "Extraordinary", not more than 10.
- (d) **Branches.**

Areas in Provinces and States, as decided on by the Standing Committee from time to time.

Note. Patrons shall be entitled to attend the Conference of the A.-I. W. C. and to vote at the open sessions.

Life Associates under the old Constitution will have the right of attending the open sessions of the Conference and voting as hitherto.

ARTICLE IV.

Agencies of Work :

The work of the A.-I. W. C. shall be carried out through :

- (1) The Standing Committee and its Executive ;
- (2) The Branches, Constituent Branches and their Committees, by means of :
 - (a) Conference.
 - (b) Meetings.
 - (c) Correspondence.
 - (d) Publications.

ARTICLE V.

Conferences :

I. The All-India Conference :

- (a) Conferences of the A.-I. W. C. shall be held periodically, at a time and place fixed by the Standing Committee.
- (b) The following shall be entitled to attend :
 - (i) Patrons.
 - (ii) Standing Committee Members.
 - (iii) Branch Delegates.
 - (iv) Reception Committee Delegates.
 - (v) Special Delegates (by invitation by the Standing Committee).
 - (vi) Visitors (not allowed to participate in the deliberations).

Note:—Life Associates under the old Constitution will have the right of attending the open Sessions of the Conference and voting as hitherto.

II. Branch Conferences :

Public Conferences shall be convened annually by all the Branches and their Constituent Branches.

ARTICLE VI.

Branches and Constituent Branches.

1. Constituent Branches.

Any group of ten members, which accepts the aims and objects of the A.-I. W. C., may, subject to the approval of the Standing Committee, become a Constituent Branch and carry on the work of the A.-I. W. C.

2. Branch :

A Branch shall be an association of the A.-I. W. C., in a specified area, with a minimum membership of 50, and shall consist of all the Constituent Branches within that area.

(Note:—In event of there being only one Constituent Branch in a given area, its provisional recognition as a Branch shall be decided on by the Standing Committee.)

Specified Areas : Ajmere-Merwara, Andhra, Assam, Baroda, Bengal East, Bengal West, Berar, Bihar, Bombay City and Suburbs, Calcutta City

and Suburbs, C. P. North, C. P. South, Cochin, Delhi, Gujarat, Gwalior, Hyderabad-Deccan, Hyderabad-Sind, Indore, Jath, Karnatak, Kashmir, Kolhapur, Konkan, Madras City and Suburbs, Maharashtra, Malabar, Mysore, N. W. F. P., Orissa (Utkal), Phaltan, Punjab Central, Punjab East, Sangli, Sind, Tamil Nad, Travancore, U. P. Agra, U. P. Oudh.

3. Each Branch shall carry out the ideals of the A.-I. W. C. and work under its direction.
4. Each Branch shall be responsible for its own finance.
5. Every Branch shall frame its own Constitution in keeping with the Articles and Bye-Laws of the A.-I. W. C. Association and subject to the approval of the A.-I. W. C. Executive Committee to which all proposed amendments and alterations also shall be submitted.
6. **Representation :**
Constituent Branches shall be entitled to ask for the privilege, in rotation, of electing the Branch Representatives, S. C. M.
7. **Membership :**
Any woman in India, over the age of 16, shall be eligible to become a member of a Branch of the A.-I. W. C. on payment of a subscription to, and in accordance with the rules of, that Branch.

ARTICLE VII.

Delegations :

- (a) Only Branch Members shall be entitled to attend the annual session of the A.-I. W. C. Conference as Branch Delegates. They shall be nominated and elected by the members of the Branch.
- (b) The quota of representation for each Branch shall be determined by allotting one delegate to a number of members which is equal to the total number of members divided by the number of delegates.
- (c) The number of delegates to any annual session of the A.-I. W. C. Conference shall be fixed arbitrarily by the Standing Committee at its half-yearly meeting.
- (d) The quota of representation shall be based on the half-yearly returns of membership submitted by the Branches.

Example :

(1941) Total A.-I. W. C. Membership	8,000
Total number of Delegates	200
Therefore, One Delegate for every	40 Members
If a Branch has 400 members, it gets	$\frac{400}{40} = 10$ Delegates.)

ARTICLE VIII.

Finance :

1. All moneys received shall be held in deposit by the Treasurer at a Scheduled Bank, in the name of the A.-I. W. C.
Cheques shall be signed by any two of the following Office-Bearers:
President, Treasurer and General Secretary.
2. Each Branch shall send annually to the Treasurer, before July the 1st, a minimum affiliation fee of Rs. 25/-.

ARTICLE IX.

I. Bye-Laws :

1. The Standing Committee shall have power to make Bye-Laws and Regulations for carrying out the work of the A.-I. W. C. and to alter them and add to them from time to time as occasion may require.
2. These Bye-Laws and Regulations may not be altered or added to except by the Standing Committee, at one of its meetings, by a two-thirds majority of the members present, and provided that:
 - (a) notice of such proposed alteration or addition shall have been sent in writing, by registered post, to every member of the Standing Committee at least three months before the meeting, and
 - (b) the Bye-Law in question has been in existence for at least a year.

II. Alteration of Constitution :

The Constitution of the A.-I. W. C. may not be altered except at a Conference Session by a two-thirds majority of the members present, provided that a notice of such proposed alteration shall have been sent in writing, by registered post or under certificate of posting to every member of the Standing Committee at least three months before the Conference.

BYE-LAWS (A.-I.W.C.)

I

THE CENTRAL OFFICE

Bye-Law
No.

- (1) There shall be a Central Office of the A.-I. W. C., in a town selected by the Standing Committee.

Note—Until such time as the Central Office Scheme materialises, the office shall be where the General Secretary resides.

- (2) The staff of the Central Office shall consist of :—

- (i) The General Secretary, in charge.
- (ii) The Organising Secretary.
- (iii) The Personal Assistant to the General Secretary.

- (3) **Publications:**—The Central Office shall be responsible for the proper publication and distribution of:—

1. a full report of each Conference Session.
2. a duly edited volume of reports, annually, of work done by all the Branches, as well as important information collected by them or by Members-in-charge of Special Subjects and Conveners of Sub-Committees.
3. a short sketch of the history of the A.-I. W. C., together with a memorandum of important resolutions passed at previous conferences, the Constitution and Bye-Laws of the A.-I. W. C. and other relevant matters, brought up-to-date each year.

- (4) **Library:**—There shall be a Reference Library of the A.-I. W. C. housing all reports, journals and file-information received at the Central Office.

- (5) **Records:**—Copies of the A.-I. W. C. records shall be available to Standing Committee Members, from the Central Office, on a written application to the General Secretary.

Any of the original records shall be open to inspection by the Standing Committee Members, at one of its meetings, provided due notice has been received by the General Secretary.

Bye-Law
No.

(6) **Circulars, Minutes, etc.**

1 (a) **Branch Representatives (S. C. M.)** shall receive from the Central Office, the circulars, minutes and other official literature, on payment of the full Branch-subscription for the year.

(b) On payment of Rs. 10/-, three extra sets of the circulars, minutes etc., may be obtained by a Branch Representative (S. C. M.) in order to facilitate the work of her Branch.

(c) All Constituent-Branches shall be entitled to receive, for information only, circulars and other literature from the Head Office of the A.-I. W. C., on payment of Rs. 7/- for one set or Rs. 10/- for three sets, annually to the Honorary Treasurer, A.-I. W. C.

2. **Standing Committee Members**, other than the Secretaries and Branch representatives, shall pay a subscription of Rs. 3/- for the circulars, minutes, and other official literature received by them from the Central Office for the current year.

3. **Patrons and Ex-Office Bearers**, who are not members of the Standing Committee for the year, shall be entitled to receive the circulars and minutes on a payment of Rs. 10/-.

II

APPOINTMENTS

(7) All paid officers and workers of the A.-I. W. C. shall be appointed by the Standing Committee and be responsible to it.

III

ELECTIONS

(8) **Rules of Election :**

1. Elections shall be conducted by ballot.

2. The election of all Office Bearers excluding the President, shall be held at the time and place of each Conference Session.

3. No one shall be eligible to stand for an office of the A.-I. W. C. except that of the President, unless she has already served on the Standing Committee for at least one year.

Bye-Law
No.

4. Nominations not in conformity with the following rules shall be considered invalid:—

(a) The Names of members eligible to stand for election shall be duly proposed and seconded by those qualified to nominate, and shall be sent in writing to the General Secretary within the time specified.

(b) All nominations, except those for the office of the President shall bear the written consent of the nominee.

5. Once a nominee has given her consent for election to any office other than the Presidentship, she shall not withdraw without the consent of the Executive Committee.

(9) **Election of Office Bearers:**

1. **President:**

(a) Every member of the Standing Committee shall be entitled to send in one nomination for the Presidentship. Such nomination shall reach the General Secretary within 3 months after the last session of the A.-I. W. C. Conference.

The General Secretary, before circulating the nominations received for the Presidentship, should ascertain whether the nominees are willing to stand for election or not, and mention the names of nominees who have withdrawn from the election.

(b) Nominees for the Presidentship wishing to withdraw their names shall inform the General Secretary to that effect within three weeks of the complete list of nominations being sent to them by the Central Office.

A candidate wishing to withdraw her name after the specified time shall communicate her reasons immediately to the Chairwoman who shall consult the Executive Committee on the matter.

(c) Voting papers, with the nominations mentioned in alphabetical order, shall be sent to all Standing Committee Members who shall then forward their votes, by registered post so as to reach the General Secretary at least a fortnight before the date of the half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee.

Note—Nominations & voting papers not in accordance with Rules (a) and (c) above, shall be considered invalid.

Bye-Law
No.

2. **Chairwoman**: The Chairwoman, when elected to act for any President who does not desire to fill the office, shall be nominated and elected by members of the Standing Committee, from among the Patrons (S. C. M.), Vice-Presidents and Ex-Vice-Presidents immediately after the session of the Conference.

3. **Vice-Presidents**: Vice-Presidents shall be nominated by the members of the Standing Committee and elected by the General Body. No one shall be eligible to stand for a Vice-Presidentship for more than four consecutive years.

4. **Secretaries**: When the General Secretary or the Organising Secretary is honorary, she shall be nominated and elected by the General Body.

5. **Treasurer**: The Honorary Treasurer shall be nominated and elected by the general body of the Conference.

10) **Election of other Standing Committee Members :**

1. **Patrons (S. C. M.)**: Nine Patrons shall be elected to the new Standing Committee by the General Body.

2. **Members-in-charge of Special Subjects**: Members-in-charge of Special Subjects shall, as required, be elected annually by the new Standing Committee from among past or present members of the Standing Committee. Should the person selected be from among past members of the Standing Committee, she shall first be co-opted to the Standing Committee, as an Ordinary Member.

3. **Branch Representatives (S. C. M.)** shall be nominated and elected by their respective Branches in accordance with their constitutions.

4. **Liaison Officers**

(a) Liaison Officers for organizations abroad and those appointed to act as Liaison Officers between the A.-I. W. C. and other organisations, shall be nominated and elected by, and from among, members of the Standing Committee.

(b) Liaison Officers representing other Bodies on the Standing Committee of the A.-I. W. C. shall be appointed by the Committees of their respective organizations.

5. **Conveners of Sub-Committees** shall be nominated and elected by, and from among, the members of the Standing Committee.

IV

COMMITTEES

The Executive Committee

- 11) An Executive Committee shall be appointed annually by the Standing Committee to administer the affairs of the A.-I. W. C. within the terms defined.
- 12) **Composition:**—The Executive Committee shall consist of :—
Ex-Officio :—
 (a) The Chairwoman
 (b) The Honorary General Secretary
 (c) The Honorary Treasurer
 (d) The Member-in-charge of Constitution
 (*Elected by, and from among, members of the Standing Committee*):—
 (e) Not more than two Patrons (S. C. M.)
 (f) Not more than two Vice-Presidents
 (g) Six other members, of whom not less than four shall be Branch Representatives (S. C. M.)
- 13) **Quorum** :—The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be seven members.
- 14) **Powers** :—*Invitations*—The Committee shall be empowered, in exceptional circumstances, to invite Special Delegates and Special Visitors to a Conference Session.
- 15) **Duties**:—The Executive Committee shall, among other things,
 1. ratify constitutions of Branches and Constituent-branches as submitted through the Constitution Member.
 2. recommend, for inclusion in the Conference agenda, any from among urgent and important resolutions apart from those sent in by the Branches or those drafted by members of the Standing Committee other than Branch Representatives.
 3. decide any other matters referred to it by the Standing Committee, or urgent matters referred to it by the Chairwoman.

Bye-Law
No.

The Standing Committee.

- 16) The Standing Committee shall administer the affairs of the A.-I. W. C. and decide questions affecting its policy, subject to the Constitution, and shall carry out any general or special instructions that may be issued by the General Body.
- 17) **Business :—**
1. The business of the Standing Committee shall be carried out through :—
 - (a) Meetings
 - (b) Circulars
 - (c) The Executive Committee, within the terms defined.
 2. At every annual meeting of the Standing Committee, there shall be presented :—
 - (a) The report of the General Secretary for the year.
 - (b) A duly audited Balance-sheet, by the Honorary Treasurer.
 - (c) The Organising Secretary's report for the year.
 - (d) Reports of the Fund Association and the Lady Irwin College, by the Secretary of the Fund Association.
 - (e) Reports of their work by :
 - (i) Members-in-charge of Special Subjects.
 - (ii) Conveners of Sub-Committees (if any).
- (18) **Quorum :—**The Quorum of the Standing Committee shall include at least four Branch Representatives (S. C. M.), and shall be one-sixth of the total number of members on that Committee.
- (19) **Powers :—***The Standing Committee shall, among other things, have power to :*
1. co-opt, subject to Article III (C) of the Constitution
 - (a) Ordinary Members :
 - (b) Extraordinary Members :
 - (i) Experts on any subject.
 - (ii) Representatives of other All-India Women's Organizations, on a reciprocal basis.
 2. appoint, from among the members of the Standing Committee, as many assistant secretaries as may be required from time to time.
 3. appoint Sub-Committees and *Ad Hoc* Committees.

Bye-Law
No.

4. appoint one or more of its members to represent the A.-I. W. C. on any other Body or at any meeting inviting it to do so.
5. appoint delegations in response to invitations from abroad or for any special purpose.
6. decide the question of affiliation of the A.-I. W. C. to any International Women's Organisation.
7. invite Special Delegates and Special Visitors to attend a Conference session.
8. refer urgent matters to the Executive Committee, within the terms defined.

- (20) **Duties:**—At its first meeting held after the Conference, the Standing Committee shall select special subjects for study, research or practical work. Such subjects shall be under the care of Members-in-charge of Special Subjects appointed in accordance with the rules of election.

The powers and terms of reference of such members shall be clearly defined by the Standing Committee at the time of their appointment.

- (21) **Meetings :—**

1. Ordinary Meetings of the Standing Committee shall be convened at least twice a year, the Half-yearly meeting, and the Annual Meeting, at a time and place selected by the Standing Committee.
2. Extraordinary Meetings of the Standing Committee shall be called on the written requisition of at least two-thirds of the total number of members on the Standing Committee.

- (22) **Agenda :—**

1. All items for the Agenda shall be sent so as to reach the General Secretary at least four weeks before the date of the meeting.
2. The agenda shall be sent, by the General Secretary, to all members of the Standing Committee, and others entitled to receive it, at least a fortnight before the meeting.

Bye-Law
No.

(23) **Minutes:—**The Minutes of the Standing Committee Meetings shall be recorded by the General Secretary.

A copy of the Minutes shall be posted to every member of the Standing Committee and others entitled to receive it.

(24) **Decisions:—**

1. Important decisions taken by the Standing Committee shall be in the form of resolutions duly proposed and seconded.

2. Important proposals for decision by circulation shall be sent under postal certificate to every member of the Standing Committee. The decision shall be declared according to the majority of replies received from at least one-half of the total number of members on the Committee within the period fixed for the purpose. Should the requisite number of replies be not received, or should the majority of replies received show any objection to the matter being decided by circulation, the question shall be laid before the Standing Committee at its next meeting.

Urgent business not conflicting with the general policy of the A.-I. W. C. shall be referred for decision to the Executive Committee

(25) **Attendance:—**

1. **Chair:—**In the absence of the Chairwoman, the Chair shall be taken by some one elected by, and from among, the members present at the meeting. The order of selection shall be as follows :

Patrons (S. C. M.)

Vice-Presidents

Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects

Liaison Officers, subject to the rules

Branch Representatives

other members entitled to the vote.

2. **The General Secretary:—**If the General Secretary is unable to attend a meeting of the Standing Committee, she shall, in consultation with the Chairwoman, delegate her duties *pro tem.*, to some other member of the Standing Committee, preferably an ex-Secretary.

Bye-Law
No.

3. **The Honorary Treasurer** :—Should the Honorary Treasurer be unable to attend a meeting of the Standing Committee, she shall delegate her powers, *pro tem.*, to the General Secretary or to some other responsible member of the Standing Committee, preferably an Ex-Treasurer.

4. **Branch Representatives** :—In case a Branch Representative is not able to attend a meeting of the Standing Committee, the Local Committee of her Branch shall authorise her to send a substitute whose name shall be notified to the General Secretary at least a week before the meeting.

Subjects Committee

(26) The need or otherwise of calling a Subjects Committee for the forthcoming session of the A.-I. W. C. Conference shall be annually decided by the Standing Committee at its Halfyearly meeting. In case no Subjects Committee is formed, the Standing Committee shall be summoned to function in its stead.

(27) The Subjects Committee, subject to Bye-Law No. 26, shall consist of :—

- (i) All members of the Standing Committee for the year.
- (ii) Branch Representatives as elected to serve on the new Standing Committee for the ensuing year.

Note:—In the event of any present Branch Representative having been re-elected for ensuing year, the Branch Committee shall appoint one of its delegates as second Subjects Committee Member.

(28) The Subjects Committee shall meet before the session of the Conference and may further be summoned during the session if required.

(29) The Subjects Committee shall examine, and draft the final form of the resolutions to be brought up for discussion at the conference. It may resolve itself into sub-committees for this purpose and may refer on points to the Standing or Executive Committee.

The Subjects Committee may limit the number of resolutions so as to facilitate fuller discussion and suggestions of practical importance.

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Sub-Committee :

- (30) 1. The period of life of a Sub-Committee appointed to carry out the work of the A.-I. W. C. shall be one year. The Sub-Committee may be re-appointed if required.
2. *Ad Hoc* Committees may be appointed to deal with problems that arise from time to time. Conveners of these may be co-opted as Extraordinary Members of the Standing Committee, if desired.
- (31) Conveners of Sub-Committees shall have power to co-opt upto 3 additional members who shall have specialised in the subject dealt with by the Sub-Committee.
- (32) The Chairwoman and General Secretary shall, *ex officio*, be members of all Sub-Committees.

V

VACANCIES

- (33) *Vacancies occurring between the elections*
1. among the Office Bearers shall, subject to the rules, be filled by the Executive Committee from among past or present members of the Standing Committee.
 2. among members of the Executive Committee shall be filled by that Committee, subject to the rules, from among members of the Standing Committee.
 3. among Members of the Standing Committee other than the Office Bearers, Branch Representatives or representatives of other organisations, shall be filled by the Standing Committee.
 4. among Branch Representatives (S. C. M.) or representatives of other organisations shall be filled by the Branch or organisation in question.
 5. on a Sub-Committee shall be filled by the Convener from among members of the Standing Committee.
- (34) *Paid Officers and Workers :* Any vacancy among paid officers and workers of the A.-I. W. C. shall be filled by the Standing Committee.

VI DUTIES

(35) **General:**—All Members of the Standing Committee shall

(a) be conversant with the Constitution, Bye-Laws and Regulations and modes of procedure of the A.-I. W. C., and shall be responsible to the Standing Committee for the efficient discharge of their official duties;

(b) whenever possible, tour in their respective areas on behalf of the A.-I. W. C. In the case of a Branch Representative (S. C. M.) this duty may be relegated, by her local committee, to some other person ;

(c) make it a point of attending all meetings of the Standing Committee held during the year. Reasons for unavoidable absence must be communicated, without delay, to the General Secretary.

(36) **The Chairwoman** shall be responsible for the proper conduct and order of all meetings at which she presides.

(37) **Patrons (S. C. M.) and Vice-Presidents** shall fulfil any special duties deputed to them by the Standing Committee, and shall co-operate with the Chairwoman and members of the Standing Committee in matters affecting the welfare of the A.-I. W. C.

(38) **The General Secretary** shall

1. be in charge of the Central Office and carry out such other duties as may be decided on by the Standing Committee from time to time.
2. issue circulars to the Standing Committee Members at least once in every two months. A summary of the information received in answer to such circulars, together with other relevant matter in regard to the progress of work, shall be issued by her for information of the Executive Committee from time to time.
3. circulate, as soon as possible after receiving it, any information which a Standing Committee Member may send to her for that purpose within four weeks before the Half-yearly Meeting or within six before a Conference-Session meeting of the Standing Committee. Urgent matters may be attended to at the discretion of the General Secretary ;

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4. arrange for Railway concessions for all the Office Bearers, Standing Committee Members and Delegates attending the meetings or conferences of the A.-I. W. C.;

5. convene the meetings of the Standing Committee.

(39) **The Organising Secretary** shall, as directed by the Standing Committee, assist in the formation, organisation and development of the branches and sub-branches of the, A.-I. W. C. in various areas of the country. She shall also assist the General Secretary in the work of the Central Office, and shall carry out any other instructions that may be issued by the Standing Committee from time to time.

(40) **The Honorary Treasurer** shall be responsible for (a) the collection and distribution of all monies, and for the proper maintenance of accounts, pertaining to the A.-I. W. C. (b) the framing and presentation of a Draft Budget at the first meeting of the New Standing Committee.

(41) **Duties of Branch Representatives (S. C. M.)**

1. A Branch Representative (S. C. M.) shall be one of the Secretaries of the Branch Association and must be resident in the area in which the headquarters of the branch happens to be.

2. The Branch Representative (S. C. M.) shall be the liaison Officer between the branch and the Standing Committee of the A.I.W.C. She shall present the views of her branch on all important issues arising for discussion at meetings of the Standing Committee, and shall attend to all A.-I. W. C. circulars and correspondence in consultation with her local committee.

3. The Branch Representative (S. C. M.) shall be responsible for carrying out the work suggested in the annual time-table of the A.-I. W. C. She shall forward to the General Secretary—

(a) Three weeks before the Half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee: a six-monthly report of the work done by her branch, and items for the agenda of the Standing Committee meeting.

(b) Six weeks before the Conference Session: a copy of all resolutions passed by the branch conference, duly classified; and items for the agenda of the Standing Committee Meeting.

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(c) Four weeks before the Conference Session :—

(i) the names of the Branch Delegates and Ordinary Visitors attending the All-India Women's Conference.

(ii) the name of the Branch Representative (S. C. M.) as elected for the ensuing year.

(iii) the name of a second Subjects Committee Member *in case* she herself has been re-elected as Branch Representative for the ensuing year.

(iv) The full annual report of the Branch Association.

(d) The names of any Special Delegates or Special Visitors to the A.-I. W. C. Conference that may be recommended by the Branch.

(42) **Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects & Conveners of Sub-Committees** shall

(a) within their terms of reference, collect and disseminate information, do propaganda work, file relevant press-cuttings, and keep in touch with other members dealing with similar subjects in the branches;

(b) keep the Central Office in close touch with their work and, as far as possible, posted up-to-date in regard to any legislation dealing with their special subjects which has been introduced, or is pending, in the legislature;

(c) forward detailed six-monthly and annual reports, one at the time of the Half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee and the other at the time of the Conference.

(43) 1. **The Liaison Officers** for organizations abroad shall regularly send to the Chairwoman and the General Secretary A.-I. W. C. important extracts from their correspondence.

2. **Liaison Members** between the A.-I. W. C. and other organisations shall represent the views of the A.-I. W. C. at committee meetings of the bodies to which they have been elected and shall be responsible for supplying the Standing Committee of the A.-I. W. C. with all information required.

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VII

THE A.-I. W. C. CONFERENCE SESSION.

(44) **Invitation**

Any Branch wishing to invite either the A.-I. W. C. to hold its conference or the Standing Committee to hold one of its meetings within the Branch area, shall extend a formal invitation through the Branch Representative (S. C. M.) to the Chairwoman of the Standing Committee.

(45) **The Reception Committee**

1. A Reception Committee of women shall be organized by the Branch Representative (S. C. M.) as soon as possible after the invitation to hold the Conference Session in her Branch area has been accepted by the A.-I. W. C.

2. The Reception Committee of the Conference Session shall, *pro. tem.*, be deemed to be a separate unit and, as such, shall be entitled to elect five delegates from among its members. The other members of the Reception Committee may attend the Conference as Special Visitors.

3. The entire amount of Delegates' fees shall be accredited to the account of the A.-I. W. C. Association.

4. Half the proceeds of the Variety Entertainment organised by the Reception Committee, plus half the surplus of the money collected by the Reception Committee for the Conference Session, after the expenses are paid, shall be handed over to the A.-I. W. C. Fund.

(46) **Programme:** After a formal discussion of the provisional programme by the Standing Committee, at its Half-yearly meeting, the General Secretary shall be responsible for drawing up the final programme of the Conference Session, in consultation with the Chairwoman of the A.-I. W. C. and the Branch Representative (S.C.M.) of the place where the session is to be held.

(47) **Delegates to the All-India Women's Conference shall be:**

(a) All Members of the Standing Committee.

(b) Special Delegates:

(i) Patrons who are not members of the Standing Committee for the year.

(ii) Those invited to attend as Special Delegates.

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(c) **Ordinary Delegates :**

- (i) A.-I. W. C. Branch Delegates.
- (ii) Five Reception Committee Delegates.

(48) **Special Delegates** shall have all the rights of Ordinary Delegates, and shall further be entitled to attend, by invitation of the Standing Committee, any of the other meetings of the A.-I. W. C. held during the Conference Session. *At such meetings*, they shall not, except by permission of the Chair, participate in the discussions; they shall not, in any case, vote at such meetings.

(49) **Visitors :**

1. Special visitors may, by permission of the Chair, speak during the open discussions of the Conference but shall not have the right to vote.
2. Ordinary Visitors may attend the Conference meetings but shall not be entitled either to speak or to vote.

(50) **Resolutions :**

1. Only those resolutions which are passed at the Branch Conferences or are drafted by Standing Committee Members other than Branch Representatives, and which are duly forwarded to the General Secretary, shall be considered for inclusion in the agenda of the A.-I. W. C. Conference. Exceptions may be made, by advice of the Executive Committee, in the case of important or urgent resolutions.

All such resolutions shall be subject to alteration, revision or rejection by the Subjects Committee (or by the Standing Committee if no Subjects Committee has been called for that session).

2. Resolutions for the agenda of the A.-I. W. C. Conference shall reach the General Secretary not later than six weeks before the date of the Conference. They shall be sent duly classified according to the subject-matter, and should be marked as follows :—

- (a) "Urgent" (such as those relating to Bills pending in Legislatures)
- (b) ** (those of special importance because of their All-India application)
- (c) † (local resolutions for which the backing of the A.-I. W. C. Conference is needed).

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3. Copies of all resolutions, properly classified, shall be issued by General Secretary to the members of the Standing Committee and to all others attending the Conference as Delegates.

(51) **Amendment :—**

1. Amendments to the original resolutions may be moved by members of the Subjects Committee during any of its sittings.

2. Amendments to the resolutions as placed on the agenda of the Conference may be proposed by any Delegate. Such amendments shall be given to the General Secretary, in writing, one day before the Conference-sitting at which the resolution is due to be moved.

A delegate wishing to propose an amendment to an amendment during a sessional sitting of the Conference shall send it up, in writing, to the Chair.

(52) **Business :—**At every session of the All-India Women's Conference there shall be presented :—

(a) A report of the A.-I. W. C. work done since the previous conference (General Secretary)

(b) A duly audited Balance Sheet (Honorary Treasurer)

(c) Resumes of the Branch Reports (Branch Representatives)
S. C. M.

(d) Reports from Members-in Charge of Special Subjects.

(e) Sub-Committee reports, if any (Conveners)

(f) Brief reports of the A.-I. W. E. Fund Association and the Lady Irwin College (Honorary Secretary, Fund Association.)

(53) **Procedure :—**

1. **Language :—**At sessional sittings of the Conference the speeches shall, as far as possible, be in Hindustani. At the discretion of the Chair, important speeches may be translated into the language of the area in which the Conference is held.

2. **Time and Conduct :—**The amount of time to be allowed to each speaker, and the conduct of the proceedings, shall be left to the discretion of the President, *subject* to the rules of procedure followed by the Indian Central Legislature modified, where necessary, by the Standing Committee.

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VIII

PATRONS

- (54) 1. Patrons, who are not members of the Standing Committee for the year, shall be entitled to attend the Conference sessions as Special Delegates. They may also participate, but without power to vote, in all other meetings of the A.-I. W. C.

IX

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

- (55) 1. Ordinary Co-opted Members shall have the full rights of Standing Committee Members.
2. Extraordinary Co-opted Members :—
- (a) Representatives of other organisations on the Standing Committee.
- (b) Those co-opted for special purposes or for stated periods of time only.
- Extraordinary members shall not have the right to vote except as delegates.

X

JOURNALS

- (56) 1. A journal shall be regularly published in the name of the All-India Women's Conference, in accordance with directions issued from time to time by the Standing Committee.

XI

PUBLICITY

- (57) 1. Proper publicity arrangements shall be made by the Reception Committee at the time and place of a Conference Session. The General Secretary (A.-I. W. C.), and others appointed by the Standing Committee to assist her, shall fully co-operate with the Reception Committee in this matter.
2. Statements.—No statement on behalf of the A.-I. W. C. shall be released for publication unless it has the approval and signature of the Chairwoman.

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No.**XII****ALL-INDIA WOMENS EDUCATIONAL
FUND ASSOCIATION
A.-I. W. C.**

- (58) 1. **A.-I. W. C. Liaison Officer:** The Standing Committee shall appoint, from among the twelve elected members on the Governing body of the A.-I. W. E. Fund Association, one to act as the Liaison Officer between the A.-I. W. C. and the Lady Irwin College. Such member shall represent the views of the A.-I. W. C. at meetings of the Fund Association and shall keep herself up-to-date in matters pertaining to the College.
2. **Rules for Election:** The rules for election to the Governing Body of the A.-I. W. E. Fund Association shall be published along with the Constitution and Bye-Laws of the All-India Women's Conference Association.

XIII**FINANCE**

- (59) 1. **Reserve Fund.** All donations shall be credited to a Reserve Fund of the Association of the All-India Women's Conference.
2. **The Financial Year** of the A.-I. W. C. shall be from the 1st of November to October the 31st.
3. **Balance Sheet and Donors:** The Annual Balance Sheet, as ratified by the Standing Committee, and the names of all Donors paying Rs. 10/- or more for the current year, shall be printed in the Annual Report of the A.-I. W. C.
4. **Affiliation and Registration Fees** shall be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, A.-I. W. C., before the Half-yearly meeting of the Standing Committee of that year.
5. **Delegates' fees:** Each delegate to the A.-I. W. C. Conference shall pay a fee of Rs. 10/- to the Honorary Treasurer.
6. **Standing Committee Members:** Members-in-charge of Special Subjects, Liaison Officers and Conveners of Sub-Committees (if any),

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shall be allotted certain sums, to be determined by the Standing Committee, for their expenses. Any further expenditure incurred by these members shall require the sanction of the Executive Committee.

7. **Paid Officers and Workers:** The salaries, increase or decrease in salaries, and the allowances (if any) of all paid officers and workers of the A.-I. W. C. shall be decided on by the Standing Committee.

XIV

THE A. - I. W. C. CONSTITUTION & BYE-LAWS

(Vide Article No. IX.)

- (60) 1. All proposals of alteration to the Articles, Bye-Laws and Regulations of the A.-I. W. C. shall be stated in the exact form in which the alteration is desired to be effected, and copies shall be forwarded to the General Secretary and the Constitution Member by registered post.
2. All proposals of alteration to the
- (i) **Articles** must reach the General Secretary at least four months before the date of the Conference Session.
 - (ii) **Bye-Laws and Regulations** must reach the General Secretary at least two months prior to the Half-yearly meeting or the Conference-session meeting of the Standing Committee.
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THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S EDUCATION FUND ASSOCIATION

(As the All-India Women's Conference is strongly represented on the Governing Body of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association, which came into existence through the Conference after its first Delhi session, it recommends this Fund to all those interested in the development of girls' education along the lines of its Memorandum.)

MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION

1. The name of the Association is "The All-India Women's Education Fund Association."

2. The objects for which the Association is established are :—

(1) The management of the Fund known as "The All-India Women's Education Fund."

(2) The promotion of the education of women and girls of India including :—

(a) The aid of any schemes for the furtherance of education in all its branches, of the women and girls of India as may from time to time be recommended by the Conference known as the All-India Women's Conference or under such other names as the Conference may hereafter be registered (hereinafter and in the Rules and Regulations of the Association referred to as the All-India Women's Conference.)

(b) The institution of propaganda for the education of the women and girls of India.

(c) The increase of the supply of better trained teachers, having particular regard to the inclusion of training in domestic subjects.

(d) The encouragement of the production of better text-books and attractive and suitable literature in the vernacular.

(e) The exploration and initiation of schemes for the education of children of Kindergarten age, for the extension of suitable education amongst children in rural areas, for the support where possible of approved schemes which already exist, and

for the provision of suitable housing accommodation for women teachers, especially in rural areas.

- (f) The extension of facilities in existing educational institutions for courses of training in home-craft, fine arts, domestic science, physical culture and other suitable subjects.
- (3) The purchase or acquisition on lease, or in exchange, or on hire or otherwise, of any real or personal property, and any rights of privileges necessary or convenient for the purposes of the Association.
- (4) The erection, construction, alteration and maintenance of any buildings necessary or convenient for the purpose of the Association.
- (5) The sale, improvement, management and development of all or any part of the property of the Association.
- (6) The promotion and establishment of branches and of other societies or associations with similar objects particularly in the constituent areas of the All-India Women's Conference, and the affiliation or amalgamation of such societies or associations with this Association.
- (7) The doing of all other such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Membership.

1. There shall be the following grades of members of the Association :—

- (a) President. (b) Patrons. (c) Vice-Patrons. (d) Life Fellows.
(e) Life Members. (f) Members.

2. The President shall be elected at a General Meeting for a period of three years.

3. The Patrons of the Association shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to not less than Rs. 20,000, and such other distinguished persons as the Governing Body may think proper to appoint. Every patron shall be at liberty to appoint a representative to attend and vote at the General Meetings of the Association on his or her behalf.

4. Vice-Patrons shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to Rs. 10,000. Life Fellows shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to Rs. 500. Life Members shall be donors of sums of not less than Rs. 100.

5. Members shall be persons who pay an annual subscription of not less than Rs. 5, such subscription shall be due in advance on the 1st November in every year.

6. The Governing Body may elect any person to honorary membership of any grade in recognition of services rendered to the Association.

7. The Honorary Secretary of the Association shall maintain a register of members of the Association and this register shall be open to inspection.

II. General Meeting.

8. (a) The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held once a year at Delhi at an interval of not less than 10 and not more than 15 months. The Executive Committee, however, shall have power to alter the venue for any especial reasons. (Notice of such Annual General Meetings shall be given at least one month before the date fixed, and such notice shall specify the business to be transacted. Members of all grades shall be entitled to attend and to vote on any question that may be submitted to the meeting for determination).

(b) At such Annual General Meeting the report and balance sheet for the past year, and the budget for the next year, shall be presented and an Auditor appointed for auditing the account of the next year. Any other business may be brought forward with the assent of the Chair.

9. (a) An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association may be convened at any time by the President for any purpose connected with the Association and shall be convened on the written requisition of at least 30 members stating the object of such meeting.

(b) At least 18 days' notice shall be given of such meeting, with the agenda to be brought before it, provided that accidental omission to give such notice to any member shall not invalidate any Resolution passed at such meeting, and no business other than that specified in such agenda shall be transacted.

10. (a) All General Meetings of the Association shall be presided over by the President or in her absence by the Chairwoman of the Governing Body, or in absence of both by some other person elected by those present.

(b) All questions shall be decided by the votes of the members present, taken by show of hands, but anyone present may demand a division which shall forthwith be taken and the result declared by the officer presiding.

(c) In case of equality of votes, the officer presiding shall have a second or casting vote.

The Governing Body.

11. (1) The Governing Body of the Association for the purpose of the Act XXI of 1860 shall consist of the President and 21 members including an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer, all of whom with the exception of the Honorary Treasurer, shall be women.

(2) From and after the Annual General Meeting of 1938 the Governing Body shall consist of:—

(a) the President, the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer.

(b) nineteen members of the Association elected triennially as follows:—7 elected by the Association and 12 elected by the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference of whom 2 shall be from Indian States.

(3) The members of the Governing Body shall all be members of the Fund Association.

(4) Casual vacancies among office-holders or members of the Governing Body shall be filled by the Governing Body and any person so chosen shall retain his or her office so long as the vacating member would have retained the same if no vacancy had occurred. In the event of a vacancy or vacancies occurring among those members elected by the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference, the Governing Body shall fill it or them from among names submitted to them by the said Standing Committee. No action of the Governing Body which may be otherwise valid, shall be rendered invalid by reason of any such vacancy remaining unfilled, provided, however, that the number of vacancies so remaining unfilled shall not at any time exceed 3 (three). An absence of 12 months out of India shall constitute a vacancy.

(5) The Governing Body shall have power, when necessary, to co-opt persons having expert knowledge in any Branch of the Association's work. The number of persons so co-opted shall not at any one time exceed five. Any co-option shall cease at the will of the Governing Body.

12. The Governing Body shall hold their Annual Meeting on the same day and at the same place as and immediately after the Annual General Meeting of the Association or at such other place and time as the Executive Committee may decide. The Governing Body shall, at the Annual Meeting, elect from among themselves a Chairwoman who will preside in the absence of the President and a Vice-Chairwoman who in the absence of the Chairwoman shall conduct her duties and exercise her powers. In the absence of both at any meeting, such meeting may elect its own Chairman from those present. Any vacancies in these offices shall be filled up by the Governing Body.

13. Ordinary meetings of the Governing Body shall be held at such place and time as may be fixed by the Executive Committee. The annual budget and report of the Association shall be considered at one such meeting in each year.

14. An extraordinary meeting of the Governing Body may be called at any time by the President or Chairwoman.

15. Upon a requisition in writing made by any five members of the Governing Body stating the object the President or Chairwoman shall call an extraordinary meeting.

16. Eighteen days' clear notice of any meeting of the Governing Body, specifying the place, day and hour of the meeting and the general nature of the business to be transacted shall be given to every member of the Governing Body by notice sent under postal certificate, provided that the failure to give such notice to any of the members shall not invalidate any resolution at such meeting.

17. At a meeting of the Governing Body six members must be present in person to form a quorum.

18. If no quorum is present within an hour of the time fixed for a meeting of the Governing Body, the meeting shall be held after an interval of 24 hours. If there again be no quorum, only urgent business may be transacted, and at such meeting three members shall form a quorum.

19. In the event of an equality of votes at any meeting, the presiding officer shall have a second or casting vote.

20. (1) The Governing Body shall at their annual meeting elect the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer. They may also appoint an Honorary Assistant Secretary and an Honorary Assistant Treasurer.

These shall not, *ex-officio*, be members of the Governing Body but in the event of the absence from any meeting of the Secretary or Treasurer they shall act in their respective office as members of the Governing Body. Persons holding these offices shall be eligible for re-election. Any vacancies in these offices occurring during the year shall be filled up by the Governing Body.

(2) All other appointments shall be made by the Executive Committee.

21. The Governing Body, subject to these Rules, shall have general control of the affairs of the Association with authority to make standing orders regulating its own procedure, the procedure of the Executive Committee, and the powers and duties of its officers. In particular it shall provide for a proper record of all proceedings, and for an accurate account of all receipts and payments to be opened to the inspection of the auditor.

22. In addition to the powers and authorities conferred on them either by Statute or Rules of the Association, the Governing Body shall have power to do all such acts as are to be done by the Association, with the exception of those which by these Rules or by Statute are expressly directed to be done by the Association in General Meetings.

IV. Committees

23. The Governing Body shall at their annual meeting elect an Executive Committee of eight members besides the office-bearers. Any vacancies in the elected members of the Executive Committee occurring during the year shall be filled by the Executive Committee.

This Executive Committee will perform the current duties of the Association and such other duties as the Governing Body may prescribe. The transactions of the Executive Committee shall be duly recorded and laid before the Governing Body at its next meeting for information or confirmation. In case of emergency the Executive Committee may perform any duty and exercise any power of the Governing Body. The Executive Committee may appoint any sub-committee and delegate to it any powers which may be necessary, but the proceedings of such sub-committees shall in every case be reported for information or confirmation to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall meet at such time and in such places as they think proper and at all their meetings four shall form a quorum.

24. The Chairwoman, Vice-Chairwoman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee. The Honorary Secretary shall be ex-officio members of all sub-Committees (In the absence of either Honorary Secretary or Honorary Treasurer their Assistants, if any, act as members of the Executive Committee and any of Sub-Committee.)

25. (1) All matters affecting the finance of the Association shall be referred to the Executive Committee before being determined by the Governing Body.

(2) The Executive Committee shall scrutinise the accounts of the Association and shall consider the Report of the Auditor. It shall also prepare the annual budget and submit it through the Governing Body, to the General Meeting of the Association.

26. When a Branch of the Association is formed, or any other body having for its objects the purposes for which the Association is established desires affiliation, the case shall be examined by the Executive Committee before being submitted to the Governing Body, and no such branch shall be recognised or body affiliated without the vote of the Governing Body. It shall be a condition of recognition or affiliation that each such branch or body shall have a regularly constituted committee, and shall pay an annual affiliation fee to be fixed by the Governing Body, and that its accounts be audited by an auditor approved by the Governing Body.

27. Unless otherwise desired by them, branches and affiliated bodies shall remain independent in the administration of their funds and in the conduct of their operations but they shall furnish to the Governing Body such reports and information as may be required by the Governing Body and shall assist by correspondence and conference in the furtherance of their common objects. The Governing Body shall have power, subject to the Rules to assist branches and affiliated bodies in such manner and to such an extent as it may consider to be conducive to the objects of the Association.

28. The Governing Body shall be at liberty to appoint sub-committees for such purposes and with such powers as they may think proper.

V. General

29. All moneys at any time standing to the credit of the general account which shall not be required for current expenses, and which the

Governing Body shall not determine to transfer to the Building or any other account, shall be invested by the Honorary Treasurer, with approval of the Executive Committee in securities authorised by law for the investment of trust funds.

30. The Bankers of the Association shall be the Imperial Bank of India and also if necessary the Central Bank of India Ltd.

31. The Executive Committee shall provide a seal and also provide for its safe custody, and the seal shall never be used except by the authority of the Executive Committee previously given and in the presence of two Members of the Executive Committee who shall sign every instrument to which the seal is fixed, and every such instrument shall be countersigned by the Honorary Secretary or some other person appointed by the Executive Committee.

32. If any corporation, firm, school, college or body of trustees makes any subscription or donation to the Association, the privileges which such subscription or donation carries shall be exercised by a person whom the above-mentioned may from time to time nominate for a period not exceeding ten years to be determined by the Governing Body.

33. (1) None of these Rules shall be repealed or altered and no new Rules shall be made except by Resolution passed by majority of not less than three-fifths of the members of the Governing Body present at an ordinary meeting and confirmed by Resolution passed by a subsequent General Meeting of the Association.

(2) Interpretation of these Rules shall be vested entirely in the Governing Body.

Bye-Laws for the Election of Members to the Governing Body.

1. The Executive Committee shall conduct all elections to the Governing Body.

2. Every candidate for election to the Governing Body shall be a member of the Association and shall be nominated by a member of the Association. Nomination forms for membership for the Governing Body shall be posted to each member of the Association in such form and at such time as the Executive Committee may think proper. No person can nominate herself or himself.

3. The nomination forms must be returned to the Honorary Secretary of the Association by the date fixed for that purpose accompanied by the consent in writing of the candidate nominated.

4. All nominations shall be scrutinised by the Executive Committee who shall have absolute discretion to reject any nominee. Notice of the names of all candidates so nominated together with voting papers in the form approved by the Executive Committee and instructions as to voting shall be posted to each member of the Association. The voting papers must be returned to the Honorary Secretary in special envelopes provided only for this purpose by the date fixed in the notice.

5. The voting papers shall be opened and scrutinised at a meeting of the Executive Committee or by the Honorary Secretary and two scrutinisers appointed by the Executive Committee. The votes for candidates will be counted separately and the candidate or candidates, as the case may be, receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of two or more candidates for one vacancy heading the poll with the same number of votes, the chairwoman of the Executive Committee shall exercise a casting vote.

6. The declaration of the Chairwoman of the Executive Committee declaring the candidates elected shall be final and shall be reported to the Association at the Annual General Meeting. Successful candidates shall be notified immediately of their election.

7. If, during the interval between the posting of the nomination papers and the counting of the votes, a candidate, nominated by a member of the Association, is elected to the Governing Body by the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference her name shall be removed from the voting paper.

8. The Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference shall have power to nominate not more than 3 (three) names for each vacancy occurring during any year in the Governing Body among its representatives. In the event of these nominations not being sent in to the Honorary Secretary of the Association within one month of the request for such nominations, the Governing Body shall fill the vacancy or vacancies themselves.

9. In order to simplify elections for office-holders of the Executive Committee nominations for these should be sent in by the members of the Governing Body to the Honorary Secretary at least 3 (three) days before the Annual General Meeting.

HISTORY OF THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

1. Origin of the All-India Women's Conference.

The All-India Women's Conference owes its origin to a circular letter from Mrs. Margaret E. Cousins who, in the autumn of 1926, as Secretary of the Women's Indian Association, Adyar, Madras, addressed an appeal to women all over the country to form local committees and hold Constituent Conferences in each of the Provinces and in certain other clearly defined districts and Indian States, for the purpose of declaring their views on problems of education.

The original stimulus which gave rise to Mrs. Cousins' letter was an appeal made by the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, at the Prize-Giving function of the Bethune College, Calcutta, in which he called on Indian Women to "*tell us with one voice what they want, and keep on telling us till they get it.*" Mrs. A. L. Huidekoper, an ex-Principal of the Bethune College (who, we are glad to say, is still one of our very active members), made use of this appeal as the basis of two articles which were published in *Stri Dharma*, the monthly magazine, of the Women's Indian Association, and it was after this that Mrs. Cousins took up the matter in the way just described. Her appeal met with a wide and enthusiastic response, and Constituent Conferences were held in 22 places during the months of September to December, 1926, and the First All-India Women's Conference was organised to take place at Poona, where it was duly held from January 5th to 8th 1927, under the distinguished Presidentship of Her Highness the Maharani Chimnabai Saheb Gaekwar of Baroda,—Mrs. Cousins being the first Honorary Organising Secretary. The Resolutions passed at that Conference related almost without exception to education, ranging from matters concerning Primary Schools up to those relating to College and Adult Education. The sole exception was a Resolution condemning the practice of early marriage, as it interfered with education and supporting Sir Hari Singh Gour's Age of Consent Bill, which was then about to come before the Legislative Assembly.

2. The Second Conference:

In 1928, the Second Conference was held in Delhi under the Presidentship of Her Highness the Begum Mother of Bhopal, the proceedings being opened by Her Excellency Lady Irwin (Lady Halifax). In addition to reaffirming most of the Resolutions of the First Conference, notable Resolutions were passed relating to Rai Saheb Harbilas Sarda's Bill for the

restraint of Early Marriage, which was at that time under consideration, as well as urging the Government to give representation to women in the Central Legislature, so that they might be able to express their views on pending measures affecting the interests of women and girls. The Second Conference was noteworthy also as the origin of All-India Fund for Women's Education.

3. The Third Conference :

The Third Conference, that of 1929, was held at Patna, with Her Highness the Dowager Rani of Mandi as President. It was on this occasion that the scope of the Conference was definitely widened to include Social Reform and a separate section for Social Reform was created to work on lines parallel to those of the Section concerned with Educational Reform. Three Sub-Committees of the Educational Reform Section were appointed to carry on work throughout the year in the following directions :

- (a) The drafting of a special curriculum for schools, based on the ideals underlying the Resolutions passed by the Conference.
- (b) The revising and creating of new text-books.
- (c) The investigation of the conditions of the training of teachers in all parts of India. Under the Social Reform Section also a Sub-Committee was appointed to carry on the campaign to raise the age of marriage.

4. The Fourth Conference :

By 1930, when the Fourth Conference was held in Bombay under the Presidentship of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the increased efficiency of the organisation had become very noticeable: and the Honorary Organising Secretary, Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, was able to report the accomplishment of a large amount of very effective work done by the constituent bodies in many parts of India. Prominent among the list of reforms effected through the support of the Conference and its members was the passing of the Sarda Act which, (while in the opinion of the Conference the age-limits specified in the Act were much too low, and the Act possessed some other obvious defects) was yet a bold step in the right direction. Following up that success the Social Reform Section of the Conference took a very active part in the agitation for Reform of the Laws of Inheritance as affecting women, while on the educational side an immense amount of useful constructive work, in addition to propaganda, was done by local members and committees of the Conference and its Constituencies, in such directions as the opening of New Girls' Schools, Industrial Schools,

Schools for children of the Depressed Classes, Adult Education, Prison Visiting, Relief to Women passengers on the Railways, and Child Welfare and Maternity work. A new field of work, that in connection with female labour, was opened up through the opportunity of giving evidence before the Labour Commission, while by the delegation of distinguished members to International Conference, such as the Berlin International Congress of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, the work of the Conference became known to women of other countries and *vice versa*.

It was in 1930, that the Committee of the Education Fund which had been registered the year before as "the All-India Women's Education Fund Association," decided to make a full inquiry about a suitable education for girls. An All-India Committee was appointed to investigate this matter. The members of the Committee made inquiries in their own provinces at first and then met together at Pachmarhi, C. P., in July and made their Report.

5. The Fifth Conference :

The Fifth Conference was held at Lahore, in 1931 with Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi as President. Although the year 1930-31 had been one of great difficulties owing to the pre-occupation of the country with political matters, it was nevertheless a year in which the work of the Conference made great forward strides. The number of Constituencies had by this time risen to 33, and many more schools, hostels and centres for adult education were reported as having been started through the efforts of members. The institution of the observance of March 1 as 'Women's day' and the holding of meetings in almost all the Constituencies on that day to popularise and explain the work of the Conference, was another noteworthy innovation. Vigorous and well-timed propaganda was carried on with a view to safeguarding the Sarda Act from amendments designed to nullify its usefulness; work was continued, in the direction of getting the laws of inheritance amended, and new work was undertaken in Baroda towards getting the State to lead the way in putting on the Statue Book a Divorce Act for Hindus. There were increasing signs all over the country that the propaganda of the members of the Conference in their various Constituencies was beginning to bear fruit in the changed attitude of the public towards the amelioration of the conditions of women in general, their better education, their proper representation in legislative and administrative bodies, and in the judiciary as Honorary Magistrate. The question of abolition of untouchability began to be tackled, too, in some Constituencies, notably in Madras, and while the attempt to deal

with Labour questions (for which the formation of a special Conference had been contemplated) suffered a temporary setback owing to the disturbed conditions of the times, the keenness of members to tackle that among the other many difficult problems of the day, was intensified rather than diminished.

6. The Sixth Conference :

It was in 1932, when the Conference had Madras as its venue, and its President was Mrs. P. K. Ray, that it was clearly seen that although the constitution of the Conference debarred it from taking part in *Party* politics, it could not, if it were to perform its function of establishing women in their rightful position in the state and in society, avoid concerning itself with politics in the widest sense of the term. The status of women in the new constitution of India, particularly in relation to their fundamental rights, their representation in the various bodies and the conditions of their enfranchisement, was a matter of vital importance not only to politicians, but to the whole country : and it was overwhelmingly felt that every opportunity must be taken before the constitution was actually drawn up in details, to impress upon those concerned in framing it, views of nearly half of those who would have to abide by it when framed. To this end, in April, 1931, a representative meeting was held in Bombay, under the Presidentship of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the outcome of which was that the All-India Women's Conference, the Women's Indian Association, and the National Council of Women in India, conjointly drew up a Memorandum to be placed before the Franchise Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference. In May this Memorandum was submitted to all the Constituencies, with an invitation to them to give their considered opinion upon the views stated therein, and again in its final form, before it was actually submitted to the Franchise Committee, the Memorandum was circulated to the Constituencies, from which no dissentient opinion was received. I need hardly remind you that the essential points which were decided to press in the Memorandum were as follows :

- (1) Equal rights and obligations of all citizens without any bar on account of sex.
- (2) No disability to attach to any citizens by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling.
- (3) Adult suffrage.

- (4) Women to fight elections on equal terms with men, in mixed general electorates.
- (5) No reservation of seats for women as such, nor special nomination or co-optation.

A deputation of ladies belonging to the All-India Women's Conference also waited on His Excellency the Viceroy, in May, and presented a Memorial asking for women to be represented on the Round Table Conference.

The Social Reforms Section was kept busy again this year in agitating against the attempts to amend the Sarda Act. Rai Saheb Harbilasji Sarda's Bill to secure a share for Hindu Widows in their husbands' family property was very widely supported in the Constituencies. The year was also noteworthy for the number of laws passed in Indian States, safeguarding women's rights, or enhancing their status.

The work of the Education Section went forward with unabated vigour on the usual lines, progress being made with the scheme for opening a Women's College for Home Science, Educational Research, and Training of Teachers. The Text-book Sub-Committee made considerable progress with its arduous labour, as did also the Sub-Committee on Labour, and Indigenous Industries.

7. The Seventh Conference :

The Seventh Conference met at Lucknow in 1933 under the Presidentship of Lady Ramanbhai Nilkanth. In the work of the preceding year, that of representing the viewpoint of Indian Womanhood on the constitutional question had remained uppermost, owing to the fact that the Indian Franchise Committee was occupied with its labours in India during the cold season of that year, and the Standing Committee of the Conference felt it obligatory that it should continue to press the views laid down in the Memorandum presented the year before to the Round Table Conference. Nine members of the All-India Women's Conference gave evidence at various centres, that of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (Chairwoman of the Standing Committee) being specially noteworthy for the firm stand which she made upon the principles laid down in the Memorandum in spite of the fire of searching cross-examination. From the point of view of immediate result however, those efforts were, alas! in vain, and the publication of the Communal Award was the signal for an outburst of protests from our Constituencies.

The work of the Social Section went on apace; in many Constituencies the earnest practical efforts towards the removal of untouchability and caste restrictions proved conclusively, to those who have eyes to see, that women are not—as they are usually supposed to be—the custodians of orthodoxy and conservatism. In many of the State Constituencies as well as those of British India there was a strong movement in favour of providing for divorce in Hindu society, and its equalisation for men and women among Muslims. The promotion of the cause of Swadeshi and of indigenous industries was also a very important feature of the year's work, as was also the number of instances in which members of the Conference were successful in contesting on terms of equality with men elections for seats on Municipal Corporations and academic body of Universities.

The opening of the Lady Irwin College for women, at Delhi, on November 10, 1932, was the event of the year in the Educational Section,—concrete evidence of the value of the work which had quietly and steadily been proceeding since the starting of the Education Fund four years ago. Important as was that event, however one must not allow it to overshadow all the other less spectacular day-to-day work of members in the Constituencies, for without that real underlying zeal for the educational uplift of women, throughout the land, in villages as well as in towns in quiet and devoted care and service, as well as in laying of foundation-stones and presiding over public meeting, our Conference would have never grown into the solid organisation that it now is.

8. The Eighth Conference:

Our Eighth Session was held at Calcutta, Lady Abdul Qadir being the President on that occasion. The most prominent feature of the work of 1933 had again been the political one. Owing to the publication of the White Paper in which it was seen that the attempt made by our representatives in 1931 and 1932, to gain equal status had completely failed. It became necessary therefore to frame a second memorandum in which while it was reiterated that the proposals contained in the first Memorandum provided the only satisfactory solution, the White Paper proposals were examined and a clear statement made as to how far they could be regarded as even an adequate "second best" or not. This Memorandum was submitted to the Joint Parliamentary Committee of the British Parliament, and later, three elected members representing our Conference, as also the National Council of Women in India, and the Women's I. Association, were invited to London to give evidence before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. Suffice it to say here that through Memorandum II and the firm

stand taken by our delegates in giving their evidence, we showed that, while willing to adopt an accommodating attitude in regard to details during the period of transition we stood immovably for the principle of equal status and against that of communal and special representation.

One very useful outcome of the political work outside India has been the many contacts that our delegates made with women's organisations of other countries and with institutions of international scope including the various organisations connected with the League of Nations.

Wider and wider though the scope of our activities has become, it must not be thought that this had the effect of making the current of local work flow more sluggishly. On the contrary, the work of the Educational and Social Reform Sections grows even more intensive as it grows extensive. As a whole our Movement gathers force every day from new streams of local enterprise.

9. The Ninth Conference:

The Ninth Session of the All-India Women's Conference held its sitting in December, 1934, at Karachi under the Presidentship of Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji. Practical achievement was the key-note of the Conference in the year 1934—for, in spite of many handicaps particularly of funds and workers the reports of work in the various Constituencies showed that a distinct advance was being made due to the unbounded enthusiasm of the members. For Bihar Earthquake Relief Fund the Constituencies of the Conference itself raised over thirty thousand rupees, apart from the fact that they helped in the collection of other Central Funds.

The extracts relating to women in the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee were studied in detail by the Conference, and deep disappointment was felt that the clear demands of Indian women were being ignored and it was decided that even at that eleventh hour efforts should again be made to impress on the British Parliament the united desire of Indian women for a non-communal electorate for women at least and their dislike of the wife-hood qualification which was being imposed on them. A resolution to this effect was forwarded to the Secretary of the Joint Select Committee and to the Secretary of State for India through the Liaison Officer, and this resolution was reiterated unanimously at the Half yearly meeting.

A successful effort was made during the course of the year to create a widespread demand for the appointment of a Commission on the legal

disabilities of Indian Women, which would suggest reforms in the light of modern conditions. An All-India Day was held on November 24, 1934, when meetings were held in every Constituency, and thousands of signatures were collected to support this demand. Until there is success in obtaining a more equitable system of laws, this work will be continued, as the members of the Conference feel that they cannot carry out their duties as citizens as long as they are hampered by legal restrictions both personal and civic.

The interesting report of the Committee appointed by the Conference to investigate the conditions in mines, and its suggestions regarding the women eliminated from underground work aroused a great interest in the Conference and the desire there evinced to help the unfortunate women miners showed clearly how real was the claim that the Conference aimed at improving the condition of women of all classes.

A notable feature of this year was that for the first time a permanent contact was made with the British Women's Organisations. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was appointed as the Liaison Officer for the Conference to keep in touch with Mrs. Lankester the Liaison Officer of the British Women's Organisations appointed for the same purpose. The presence of distinguished Special Visitors like Dr. Maude Royden and Mrs. Corbett Ashby during the Conference session was a proof of the great interest evidenced by women in the ideals and problems of each other.

Year by year the activities of the Conference are increasing and the success with which it is tackling every new problem is abundant proof that the women of India are not only conscious of their duties but intend to contribute their due share in the task of nation-building.

10. The Tenth Conference :

The Tenth Session was held in Trivandrum in December 1935 under the presidentship of Her Highness Maharani Setu Parvat. Bayi of Travancore. Her guidance and keen interest in the proceedings of the Conference and in the discussions made this one of the most successful sessions.

It was the first time that the Conference was held in an Indian State, a State where the percentage of literacy amongst women is higher than in any other part of India, where the purdah system is unknown and where women have equal rights and privileges,—in other words where women's rights are recognised.

An important feature of the year's work was the tremendous increase in the number of constituencies which have taken up village uplift work in earnest and have already achieved considerable progress. Rural-work: Maternity and Child welfare centres have been organised and systematic course of lectures on sanitation and health arranged.

The Sub-Committee on the Child Marriage Restraint Act did good work during the year. A Bulletin was issued giving the statistics of child marriage in our country. A good deal of propaganda was done during the year through the Press to create opinion in favour of amending the Sarda Act. It is a matter of pride to note that Mr. B. Das was given permission to introduce a Bill in the Legislative Assembly to amend the Sarda Act and most of his amendments were based on the suggestions made by the Conference.

The immediate necessity for a common language for India was recognised by the Conference. A Sub-Committee was appointed to report on the ways and means that could be adopted for the realisation of this ideal. Another Sub-Committee was appointed for the spread of literacy in the country. It was realised that unless a concerted and intensive campaign against illiteracy is organised, the moral and material progress of the land is bound to be hampered.

The work of the Liaison Group which was appointed for the first time last year had gone on well during the year. The establishment of this contact with the British women's organisations has been of great service to the Conference. The Group as a whole, worked increasingly to press the demand of the Conference concerning franchise and did their best to educate public opinion in England. The Group also arranged busy programmes for Conference members during their stay in England. This gave them an opportunity of speaking about the Conference. Ample publicity was given in English newspapers to all they said and did on behalf of the Conference.

The Constituencies had collected funds in the previous year for relief of people in Bihar stricken by the earthquake; this year also funds were raised in the same way for the Quetta Earthquake Relief. Special mention must be made here of the organised help that was given by the members of Constituencies in Central Punjab, Sind and North-West Frontier Province to the refugees in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and other places.

With regard to franchise there was nothing much left to be done. All efforts to alter the qualifications for franchise mentioned in the

Government of India Bill were of no avail; repeated demands, representations, and statements met with but little success and the Government of India Bill was passed into an Act. A resolution was passed reiterating the disapproval of the Conference of the franchise qualifications but urging on the women to use the powers granted to them by the Act, however inadequate they may be.

There was a lively discussion on the question of Birth Control during the proceedings of the Tenth Session. The Conference was fortunate in having Mrs. Sanger, one of the prominent workers in the United States of America, whose vast experience and knowledge was helpful. The Conference passed by a large majority the resolution supporting the necessity for instruction in methods of Birth Control through recognised clinics.

Notable visitors from foreign countries, U. S. A., England, Japan and China were present at this Session. It was a source of great encouragement and inspiration to all. The women's cause is the same all over the world and it gave one an opportunity of exchanging ideas and learning one another's experiences.

The number of Constituencies and members had been increasing during the year. The report of the work done in the different constituencies show that women are taking a much greater interest in social work. The activities had increased and most constituencies had undertaken practical work in some direction.

11. The Eleventh Conference :

The Eleventh Session of the A.-I. W. C. was held at Ahmedabad in December 1936, under the Presidentship of Mrs. M. E. Cousins. We entered this year into the second decade of our work. It is gratifying to note from the work of the past ten years that the A.-I. W. C. has now taken its rightful place as a representative and fully established women's organisation in India. This year more concentration was given to the need for medical inspection in schools and to the opening of hostels for girls and for the removal of illiteracy by starting even night schools. The year 1936 should be mentioned for the outstanding event of the year, *viz.*, the opening of the State Temples of Travancore to all classes of Hindus by H. H. the Maharaja of Travancore, when H. H. Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi, his illustrious mother, was our President. A great deal of propaganda work was carried out by our Constituencies by holding meetings and

enlisting public support for the Social Bills introduced in the Legislative Assembly—*e. g.*, Dr. Deshmukh's Bill to amend the Hindu Law governing Hindu Women's Rights to Property, Mr. B. Das's Bill to amend the Sarda Act in order to make it more stringent, Dr. Bhagwan Das's Bill seeking recognition of inter-caste marriages, and Mr. Hafiz Abdullah's Muslim Personal Law Application Bill,—and to urge their adoption by the Assembly.

Our Constituencies also tried to introduce improvements with regard to sanitation, health and education in the villages and this year was also devoted to the uplift of Harijans. Leper relief, tuberculosis work, maternity and child welfare, encouragement of indigenous industries were dealt with during the year. The Special feature of this year was the work done by our Franchise Sub-Committee for the enrolment of women voters for the new Legislature, Municipalities and District Boards. At the request of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, a Memorandum on the Political, Legal, Social and Educational Status of Women in India was submitted to the League of Nations and the Government of India. The question of a Central Office to meet the expansion of our work was also considered and a scheme for the same was also prepared. We had this year Special Visitors from England, Australia and other visitors from U.S.A. and Holland who attended the conference.

12. The Twelfth Conference:

The Twelfth Session of the All-India Women's Conference was held at Nagpur in December, 1937, under the Presidentship of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

The most notable feature of the year 1937 was the inclusion of about 60 women in the Legislatures of the various provinces, which was possible on account of the facilities given to women to contest elections held under the Government of India Act 1935. One of these, namely, the Hon'ble Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit was elected to be a Cabinet Minister which shows the gigantic strides made by the women's movements on the country. A few of our women have been elected as Deputy Speakers of various Legislatures and some have been appointed Parliamentary Secretaries.

More constructive work was undertaken by the Branches. The Standing Committee considered the draft curriculum of girls' primary schools in India, and the suggestions made by us were considered helpful by the Educational Commissioner to the Government of India. Some of the Consti-

tuencies have started conducting village schools and also other useful village work, such as, adult classes, night schools, etc. A scheme has been prepared by the Convener of the Common Language Sub-Committee, which is expected to be useful for solving the common language problem.

The Standing Committee prepared a programme of legislation for improving the social status of women and the same was forwarded to the Prime Ministers of the new Provincial Governments and to the new women members of the Legislatures. Also brochures dealing with such vital problems as child marriage, birth control, temperance, etc., have been prepared in different vernaculars and forwarded to local committees. Much propaganda was done and meetings were held regarding the legal disabilities of women and resolutions expressing public opinion in the matter were forwarded to proper quarters.

Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee, an ex-Chairwoman of the Standing Committee, was appointed by the Government of India as Indian delegate to the Conference of the Central Authorities of the League of Nations in Eastern Countries for combating traffic in women and children, held at Bandoeng, Java, in February, 1937. An excellent report on the women suffrage movement was prepared by Rani Lakshimibai Rajwade, which is expected to educate women on the subject.

Mr. Ekstrand, Director of Opium Traffic and Social Questions Section of the League of Nations, visited India on his way back from Java and gave lectures under the auspices of the A.-I. W. C. stressing the work to be done for children suffering from physical and mental congenital defects and some of our Constituencies have started work on the lines suggested by him.

Propaganda against child marriage was vigorously carried on and steps were taken to file complaints and to prosecute cases against offending parents and priests, with some measures of success.

Mrs. Grace Lankester, our Liaison Officer in England, was present at the Nagpur Session. It is gratifying to note that our Liaison work is getting on satisfactorily. There has been increasing contact with other countries in the world and an invitation was received from British Guiana to attend the Centenary Celebration of the Indian Emigration.

Untouchability work has been pushed ahead, and as a result some Municipalities have thrown open tanks and wells to Harijans.

One of our Constituencies is running free Harijan School. Following the example of the Travancore State, some other Indian States have allowed Temple entry to all Hindus. Some members of Constituencies are paying regular visits to Jails and provincial and State Governments are being urged to take steps to improve the condition of women prisoners, as also to provide suitable occupations for women labourers eliminated from the mines.

Swadeshi Exhibitions were held in many Constituencies and there was a large sale of Swadeshi articles. A directory of Swadeshi articles has been prepared. The Indigenous Industries Sub-Committee prepared a Scheme which was forwarded to the Director of Industries in various provinces and states. A Scheme for unregulated industries is in hand.

New Sub-Constituencies have been opened at Bhusawal, Kirloskerwadi, Bijapur, Belgaum, Patan, Mehsana, Visnagar, Navsari, Amreli, Surat, Broach and Rajpipla. This brings the list of sub-constituencies to more than 100. There are now 38 working Constituencies.

The most important development this year was the Resolution tabled at the Session at Nagpur for widening the scope of the Conference by amending Article II of the Constitution so as to enable the Conference to take part in the progressive welfare of the people of India in all directions and not merely in educational and social spheres. To this resolution several amendments were tabled. For want of the necessary four-fifths majority required for changing the Constitution, the question remained undecided. But the discussion showed a keen desire amongst the members to widen the scope of the activities of the Conference.

13. The Thirteenth Conference :

The Thirteenth Session of the All-India Women's Conference was held in Delhi in December, 1938, under the Presidentship of Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade. The Conference had distinguished visitors, Miss Mary A. Dingman, President of the Peace and Disarmament Committee of the International Women's Organisations, Mlle. P. Hage of the International Labour Office, Geneva, Mrs. Ali from Japan, Mrs. Harlow from the United States of America, Miss G. F. Greig of Australia, and Miss Agatha Harrison. Most active work was done in the removal of illiteracy and this was not restricted to towns but was extended to the villages as well. Schools have been started for Harijans and practical knowledge on sub-

jects of sanitation and hygiene given. The Conference studied in detail the Wardha Education Scheme and a practical scheme of working Nursery schools was drawn up.

A Common Language Sub-Committee carried its work and suggested a constructive scheme which was followed by many Branches. The social work of the Conference has been extensive. Public opinion was created regarding bills introduced in the Provinces and in the Central Legislature in particular dealing with Divorce, Monogamy, Restraint of Polygamy and the Legal Disabilities of women.

Exhibitions of the products of agriculture and of various industries, such as home-craft, painting, leather-work, clay-modelling, needle-work, etc., were held.

Considerable attention was given to maternity and child welfare. Several of our Branches conduct maternity and child welfare clinics. The Health Sub-Committee devoted itself to improving the sanitary conditions prevailing in the schools of their Provinces and persuaded the authorities to improve conditions of living of the workers. Indigenous industries were encouraged by helping the sale of the products of cottage industries by canvassing orders for them.

Another important feature was the promotion of inter-communal harmony by the formation of what is called the "Family Circle" which includes men and women of all castes and creeds and communities.

Propaganda against child marriage continued as before.

The Liaison Group in England continued its work of giving publicity to the work the A.-I. W. C. abroad.

The newest venture, however, is the publication of a journal belonging to the Conference.

The work of the Conference has extended and there are now 40 Branches and 150 Sub-Branches. New Branches were opened in Jath and Kathiawad during the year. Work in several other Branches was re-organised through the services of an Organising Secretary.

14. The Fourteenth Conference :

The XIV session of the Conference was held in Allahabad under the presidency of Begum Hamid Ali. Owing to the International situation

overseas members were not able to come. The Conference continued its work but the horror of totalitarian wars and the insecurity of small states were too near and recent not to have brought out the wholesale condemnation of such wars by the Conference. The procedure followed in the previous conference held at Delhi was continued at Allahabad. The group discussions naturally reduced the time available for plenary sessions but it was felt that free and frank discussions and exchange of experiences were more valuable and educative than platform oratory.

The Liaison group in Great Britain continued its work of not only giving publicity to the women's work in India but also of creating public opinion to recognise the just claims of this country in the political sphere.

The creation of a new liaison officer for South Africa was another feature of this session.

For the first time the General Secretary of the year was made responsible for the Bulletin of the Conference and with the help of the President and Patrons and other members of the Conference four issues of the Bulletin were published with two supplements, one on Education and the other on Health.

The appointment of an Organising Secretary for the United Provinces was followed by further activities in this direction and resulted in the organisation of a new Branch in Dehra Dun and the re-organisation of the Benares unit. The total number of Branches at present is 35, the number of units 121, and total membership is 8607.

15. The Fifteenth Conference.

The Fifteenth session of the Conference was held at Bangalore in December 1940, under the Presidentship of Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru. After the Tenth session this was the first time that the Conference met in an Indian State. Though the country was passing through very critical times and though some of our leading workers were in jail still a fairly large number of delegates attended the Conference. The decision to send a goodwill mission to China on behalf of the A. I. W. C. was postponed due to unavoidable reasons. A welcome feature of this session was that some of our sisters from Ceylon were kind enough to be present and it is sincerely hoped that this precedent will be followed by the sisters of other neighbouring countries to foster better understanding amongst the Asiatic nations.

The Branches of the Association carried on their various activities during the year and while some of them did very valuable work, the activities of others were only nominal. Almost all the Branches did some valuable work to tackle the problem of the appalling illiteracy of our masses and it is a matter of legitimate pleasure and pride to us that their activities bore some useful fruit. Besides various Branches did useful work in other directions, such as opening hostels for girl students, opening maternity and child welfare clinics, opening nursery schools and organising Swadeshi exhibitions.

As a result of the agitation carried on by the Conference the Government of India was persuaded to appoint a Committee to examine the injustice done to women in Hindu Law. The Conference raised its emphatic protest against the limitations imposed by the terms of reference to the Committee so appointed. It is a matter of deep regret that the Government has not realised the futility of such piecemeal legislation when the whole problem of the position of women in Hindu Law requires a full and comprehensive examination in order to adapt the law to meet modern conditions.

The Lady Irwin College continued to progress satisfactorily during the year under review. The number of admissions was increased during the year and the increasing number of applications for admission to the College demonstrate its great utility and popularity.

Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon continued to render valuable service to the Conference as the Editor of the Roshni. Roshni has become a valuable instrument for carrying on the propaganda of the Conference and for expressing the feelings of the womanhood of India. We hope this mouth-piece of the Conference will continue to expand its manifold services to the cause.

The Conference represents the womanhood of India of all castes and creeds and of all shades of opinion. Its primary object is the amelioration of the conditions of the women of our country and all its propaganda and activities are directed towards achieving that primary aim.

MESSAGES.

"It is a pity that circumstances should have prevented me from being with all of you today. And it is not easy to think of a message that will not be merely platitudinous.

"A Conference of women meeting at a time such as this must show its ability to comprehend the vital issues which are agitating human beings in every corner of the earth. We cannot remain non-committal nor can we be inactive. To do so, would be to fossilise ourselves. The All-India Women's Conference must ally itself with the progressive forces of the times if it intends to develop into a peoples organisation.

"I earnestly hope the Conference will take courageous and realistic decisions and I wish it every success."

Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali.

"May God help and guide you. These are momentous times when every move has a far reaching effect. May your joint efforts be successful in carving a further step towards Peace in the country and outside."

Begum Hamid Ali.

"Wish successful session."

Mrs. Thangam Anandram.

"Sincere good wishes for success of All-India Women's Conference."

Miss Vera Brittain.

"Greatly regret impossible leave China to attend Conference. Please convey my personal greetings and good wishes of women of China to women of India."

Madame Chiang Kai Shek, Chungking, China.

"Much regret inability attend Conference. Wish all success."

Rani Laxmi Devi of Phaltan.

"Though this year's Conference is being held nearer home, it has not become possible for me to attend it. I wish the Conference every success."

Maharani Lalita Kumari Devi, Vizianagaram.

"Wish the Conference every success."

Rajkumari Leelavathi Devi Avaru, Princess of Mysore.

"My sympathy and all good wishes for a very successful session."

H. H. Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mayurbhanj.

"The most important work before Conference is recognise special obligation of women of India to enforce constructive programme which I have put before the nation in my recent pamphlet. It should satisfy highest ambition for service of tallest women in India."

Mahatma Gandhi.

"Regret unable attend. Apologies. Wish success."

Mrs. Janakibai Godbole.

"You and your colleagues so much in my thoughts these days. Give special greetings to Conference."

Miss Agatha Harrison.

"British Section Women's International League sends thoughts warm greetings Conference meeting in such critical days."

Miss Duncan Harris, England.

"I am immensely sad that I cannot be with you all for the Cocanada Session-but my ill health prevents me.

"We have travelled a very little distance only towards our goal. But my conviction is being daily strengthened that women have a definite role to play in shaping the destiny of our country and the new order for which we and the whole world yearns—an order in which peace and happiness and freedom and equality and love shall reign instead of war and its resultant sorrow, slavery, inequality and hatred.

"I hope the Conference will march gloriously on and that we shall all be spurred as never before to do our duty.

"I wish the Session and the work of the Conference during the year ahead of us every success under the able guidance of Shri Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit.

"And I would like also to add one word of appreciation of the fine work and leadership of our retiring President."

Bardoli, 12-12-41.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.

"So it brings my warmest greetings and good wishes for a very successful Conference."

Mrs. Grace Lankester, Liaison Group in England.

"I wish the Conference every success."

Mrs. Hansa Mehta.

"I am sure under the able guidance of Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, our worthy President, the Conference will be a great success. I hope the next year will dawn under better world conditions; peace and fraternity ought to be our watch word. Let us hope that the terrible devastation of the whole world will end soon. We as mothers and sisters of our nation must strive to achieve this end. Wishing all success to our Conference."

Mrs. Sharadaben Mehta.

"Extremely disappointed unable to attend. Wish Session every success."

Mrs. S. C. Mukerjee.

"I send my greetings to all friends and fellow-members of the Conference. I regret that I am unable to attend this year's session owing to an important meeting of the Congress Working Committee."

"I wish the Conference success worthy of its ideals under the guidance of Shri Vijayalakshmi Pandit. I am confident that the women of India will prove that they are not a whit behind the women of other lands, East or West, in a clear, brave and wise approach to the realities and essentials of the World situation at this critical time in the History of Humanity."

"I am confident that they will prove their selfless and united devotion to their own country and help to maintain unsullied her integrity and honour; and in furthering all endeavours for her progress and freedom in accordance with the great tradition which have always been inspiration of the Indian people."

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

"All good wishes to your Conference."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

"While I regret my inability to be present for the Conference, I am sending my best wishes for the success of the Conference at Cocanada."

V. K. Lakshmikutty Neithyaramma,
Consort of H. H. the Maharaja of Cochin.

"X'mas greetings from American Officers of World Women's Party. We send you greetings and love."

Miss Alice Paul, Women's Party,
49, Capitol Hall, Washington.

"Regret inability attend. Wish successful fruitful sessions."

Shrimati Savithri Rajan.

"The Cocanada Session of the All-India Women's Conference is being held at one of the most critical and fearful junctures of world history. So far we only heard of the ruthless destruction wrought by the War in distant parts of the world, but today the armageddon has come to our very door. We may, at any moment, see its hungry flames devastating the country and spread death and destruction in its wake. Today, as never before, we must strive our best to help establish peace in the world.

"Even while these tremendous forces are at work and every help is being taken from India in the name of the preservation of Democracy, the political and social problems that face us and affect our immediate future remain as pressing and as unsolved as ever. The Conference, the largest and most comprehensive organization of the women of India, must therefore make a determined effort and work for gaining political freedom as a means to social regeneration. The Conference has also yet to put its ideal of establishing contact with the mass of women, understand their problems and difficulties and gain their co-operation so essential for progress. It must chalk out a definite policy in this behalf and strive to fulfil it regardless of the effort or risk involved. It will never do to avoid controversy or conflict. The Path of least resistance may be easy to tread but does not necessarily lead to the cherished goal.

"I am confident that under the able guidance of the President Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit the Conference will enter into a newer phase of life and become a vital force in attaining the material and spiritual progress of this great country."

Rani Lakshmibai Rajwade.

"I wish the Conference all success and hope the women's movement in India will substantially help the freedom and progress of India."

Shri A. Kaleswara Rao.

"Though I very much wish to share with you the joy of meeting and exchanging thoughts, ideas and experiences with the educated and enlightened women workers from all parts of India, on account of my poor state of health for the last few years I am not able to attend the session and be of some help to you in this great service for our womanhood. However, I have been watching and admiring your great capacity and your great desire to do some selfless service to our sisters. I have to rest content with sending a message and prayer to the Conference that the Almighty may bless it with glorious success."

Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi.

"Women preserved Indian nationalism. They must emancipate it under Vijayalakshmi's lead."

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

"Please convey my heartiest greetings to the Conference and my best wishes for its success. I am particularly sorry I miss the Conference when my friend Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit is presiding over it. I shall be with you all in spirit."

Mrs. Radhabai Subbarayan.

"I wish your Conference a success."

Mrs. K. Ramasubamma.

"In the name of Indian Adult Education Association I have very great pleasure in sending you greetings wishing you success. The country has been looking forward to the women's and youths' movements to make headway since the health, strength and vitality of these movements alone can shape the destinies of our country retrieving its reputation she enjoyed for centuries."

Indian Adult Education Association in South India,

Y. M. C. A., Pedukottai.

"Hope the 16th Annual Session of the All-India Women's Conference will be a great success as usual."

National Council of Women in India.

"Wish Conference successful fruitful session inspiring leadership."

Women's Indian Association.

"Extremely disappointed unable join you in your deliberations due to unavoidable circumstances. Wish session all success."

Members Calcutta Branch.

"Wish Conference all success."

President, Mysore State Women's Conference.

Appendix II.

Women Workers' Training Scheme.*(As adopted by the Standing Committee, A. I. W. C. on 2-1-42)*

The time has come when the A. I. W. C. should undertake programme of work that will reach out to the larger masses of women and enable them to become healthy, intelligent and useful citizens of our country. As a large number of trained, full time workers is necessary for the effective execution of such a programme, this Conference appoints a Sub-Committee of five with power to co-opt to prepare a scheme for training women, the scheme to confine itself for the present to prepare cadres of women for

- (1) the operation of this scheme;
- (2) the spread of literacy;
- (3) Health Visitors' work; and
- (4) Village industries.

According to the resolution of the A. I. W. C. Standing Committee, the Workers' Training Sub-Committee held its first meeting on the 29th December 1941. at 9 P. M. The following members were present:—

Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Shrimati Kamaladevi, Lady Rama Rau, Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, Mrs. Hannah Sen, Mrs. Urmila Mehta, Miss Mridula Sarabhai, Mrs. Rajan Nehru, Mrs. Renuka Ray and Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan.

On request from the Convener, Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai explained the draft Scheme for Workers' Training. After due discussion, the following was accepted to be placed before the new Standing Committee Meeting on the 1st January 1942, for their approval. It was also decided that the site for the first Provincial Organisers' Training Camp should be selected from the following places:—

Allahabad, Gujarat, Wardha.

For the purpose of this Scheme the following shall, amongst others be considered as Provinces :—

- (1) Ajmere-Merwara, (2) Gujarat, (3) Bombay (City & Suburbs)
- (4) Maharastra, (5) Karnatak, (6) Kerala, (7) Tamil Nad,
- (8) Andhra (9) Utkal, (10) Bengal, (11) Assam, (12) Bihar,
- (13) U. P., (14) Punjab (15) Sind, (16) N. W. F. Province,
- (17) Berar, (18) Nagpur, (19) Mahakoshal (20) Delhi;
- States. (21) Mysore, (22) Travancore, (23) Hyderabad (Dn.),
- (24) Indore, (25) Kolhapur, (26) Cochin.

Training Scheme.

The workers to be trained will be divided into three classes:—
(i) Provincial Organisers; (ii) District Organisers; (iii) Unit Organisers.

Provincial Organiser.

1. The arrangement of the Provincial Organisers shall be made by the Workers Training Scheme Sub-Committee of the A. I. W. C.

2. For this purpose the Women's Training Sub-Committee shall open a centre for the duration of 4 months, accommodation arrangements to be made according to the number of candidates selected.

3. Candidates for the courses shall be selected by a Selection Sub-Committee appointed by the W. T. Sub-Committee, in consultation with the Provinces.

4. Only those candidates shall be selected who are graduates and possess knowledge equivalent to graduation, or those who have shown initiative and organising capacity. A working knowledge of Hindustani will be necessary.

5. Candidates other than those selected, coming through organisations or directly, to be trained, will be admitted if they pay the full expenses.

6. The charges for the training of selected candidates for four months will include boarding, lodging, and instruction fees. Medical treatment or special diet will be extra. This cost will be met either wholly or partly by the student or the Provincial Branch sending her or getting her a scholarship (for this purpose).

7. The selected candidates for posts of Provincial Organisers in the Provinces will have to undergo a probationary period of six months.

8. The pay of the Provincial Organiser for the probationary as well as the later period shall be fixed by the Provincial Branch in consultation with the W. T. Sub-Committee. Rules of service and duties of the Provincial Organiser shall be laid down by the W. T. Sub-Committee.

9. The candidate will have to give an undertaking to work for the province for at least two years. Rules to safeguard against the defaulters shall be framed by the W. T. Sub-Committee.

10. The Provincial Organisers for all purposes of their service shall be under Standing Committee of the A. I. W. C., their salaries to be paid

by the Standing Committee and their services only considered as lent to the Provincial Branches.

11. The medium of instruction shall be Hindustani and English.
12. The Provincial Organiser shall also be the Organising Secretary of the Branch.
13. Refresher courses shall also be arranged for those who had left school long ago and needed to revise her general knowledge. These to be organised by the Provincial Branches in the Provinces themselves, in consultation with the W. T. Sub-Committee.

Syllabus for the Provincial Organisers' Training Centre.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| (i) Office organisation including filing, elements of accountancy, collection of statistics, reporting, keeping of diary, correspondence, conducting of meetings, keeping Bank accounts, etc. | 12 lectures |
| (ii) Methods of work in emergencies such as floods, epidemics, etc. | 8 lectures |
| (iii) Methods of constructive work such as Health work, Adult Education, etc. | 12 lectures |
| (iv) Outlines of comparative religions | 6 lectures |
| (v) Our social problems and institutions, including comparison with those of other countries | 12 lectures |
| (vi) Government agencies and non-Government agencies | 12 lectures |
| (vii) Lectures on "How to approach the Work" including special reference to women's nature, her handicaps, etc. | 6 lectures |
| (viii) Method of collection of funds, etc. | 3 lectures |
| (ix) Rural and urban people and their problems including psychology of the educated and uneducated | 12 lectures |
| (x) Elements of economics, sociology and psychology | 12 lectures |

- (xi) Health and Hygiene 12 lectures
- (a) Diseases—simple and contagious, causes and prevention.
 - (b) Cleanliness of public places.
 - (c) Personal and home cleanliness.
 - (d) First aid in simple accidents (cuts, burns, sprains, bites, swellings, etc.)
- (xii) Civics—administration of the province—civil liberties, laws, specially those relating to women 20 lectures
- (xiii) Physical Training
- (a) All the orders of drill giving more attention to pose and bearing ;
 - (b) Squad drill in two ranks with and without lathi.
 - (c) Route March, platoon formation, march discipline and general parade.
 - (d) Walking, running, cycling.
 - (e) Indian games. (f) Lathi. (g) Camping and its management.
- (xiv) Elementary knowledge of one of some industries such as tailoring, spinning, etc.,
- (xv) Community singing.

Camp Rules shall be framed by the W. T. Sub-Committee.

Finances.

For the present estimated cost for only the Central Office of the W. T. Sub-Committee, Provincial Organisers' Training Camp together with the expected cost of the annual recurring expenses of the Provincial Branches when they engage full time Provincial Organisers, is given below :

1. The Office expenses of the W. T. Sub-Committee will be given by the A. I. W. C.
2. The salary of the Provincial Organiser shall be collected by the Province and handed over to the W. T. Sub-Committee at the beginning of each year. Where the economic condition of a

Province does not permit it, the A. I. W. C. may help such a province.

3. The salary of the District Organiser shall be collected by the District and handed over to the Provincial Branch Executive.

W. T. Sub-Committee's Annual Budget.

1. Yearly salary of the Secretary in charge of the office — Rs. 100/- a month Rs. 1,200/-
2. Yearly office expenses including printing, publicity, etc., etc., Rs. 1,500/-

Provincial Budget.

Initial non-recurring expenses for the establishment of the office Rs. 400/-

Yearly Recurring Expenses.

1. Yearly salary of the Provincial Organiser — Rs. 50/- a month Rs. 600/-
2. Office expenses including stationery, postage, 3rd class travelling expenses Rs. 700/-

It is difficult to give any categorical figures for recurring Provincial expenses as they may vary from Province to Province slightly.

Provincial Workers' Training Camp Budget for 4 Months.

Provincial Budget for sending a Candidate to the Provincial Training Camp Rs. 120/- for 4 months plus 3rd class travelling expenses of the candidate.

ROSHNI

Appendix III.

Report for 1941.

Membership. Today we have 170 paying subscribers. We lost seven from our last year's but gained 32 new ones this year which includes six women's colleges.

Rate of Subscription. In 1940 it was Rs. 2/- per annum inclusive of postage. It was raised to Rs. 3/- in 1941 to meet the increased cost of paper and postage. It is not advisable to raise the rate any further unless the journal is made into a monthly. The best method would be to get more subscribers. If we have 300 regular subscribers the Bulletin can go on without external help.

Some of the Branches which receive the Roshni regularly do not pay their subscription. (Bengal-East, C. P. North, Tamil Nadu, Kolhapur, Konkan, N. W. F. F. and Bihar did not pay their subscription for 1940).

Finances. The cost of printing and circulating each issue comes to about Rs. 150, for a bulletin of about 115 Pages. This year we printed 1st No. 400, 2nd and 3rd 300 each, and 4th 350. The reduction of printing order for recent issues was resorted to as a measure of economy. The extra 50 copies of the December number were sent to the Hon. General Secretary at Cocanada for sale and propaganda. A few days ago I sent an audited statement of our finances for the period from April 1940 to 31st Oct. 1941. From the subscriptions I have been able to pay for only the 1st No. of 1940, and the 1st and 2nd numbers of 1941. I am collecting money for the 3rd number of this year. The Conference paid for the other three numbers of 1940. I have not drawn upon the Conference funds for the copies printed this year. I have not received any books or accounts from the previous editor except a sum of Rs. 30 which was handed to me at Bangalore.

Our Contributors. More than half of our contributors are not members of the Conference. But they have been very helpful. Most of them, however, are subscribers. I am extremely grateful to them for their continued help. It is very necessary that the office should supply me regularly with whatever literature it gets from time to time, e. g. The International News Bulletin, which contains useful articles capable of being reprinted in the Roshni. It will be useful also, if the President of each year could write frequently something about the work of the Conference as it progresses. Branches also may send from time to time interesting details of their own

work and accounts of women's institutions run by them or other women's organisations in their areas.

Advertisements. I made attempts to secure advertisements but did not succeed, mainly because our circulation is small. Advertisements suitable to the journal will certainly improve its financial status if members of the Conference in different places can help through their personal efforts in securing them. I shall be most grateful for the same. In the case of a journal of this kind it is difficult to secure them by mere correspondence.

Lady Irwin College. Complaints have been made that Roshni does not give enough publicity to the College. But the reason is only that I am not supplied with regular information about the College either directly or through the office of the Conference. I have tried to secure this information but I regret that I have not succeeded in doing so.

Nazarbagh, Lucknow,
27th Dec. 1942

Lakshmi N. Menon
Editor.

THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

SEVENTEENTH SESSION



BOMBAY

APRIL 7, 1944 TO 10, 1944